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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
What should the CNMI do with the land alienation provision of the Constitution in 2011?

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to cast your vote.

INSIDE



NYC Bombing

For the third time in as many years, someone riding a bike and armed with a small explosive has struck in Manhattan.

NATION...Page 10



RP Heroes

Forbes magazine has named four top Filipino business executives as among the "Heroes of Philanthropy" in Asia.

MAHARLIKA...Page 12



12 Idols

American Idol cut four contestants from the competition, leaving a dozen finalists to vie for the grand prize.

LIFE & STYLE...Page 20

XTERRA athletes descend on Saipan. PAGE 2
Defibrillators eyed for sites outside hospital. PAGE 3

\$164M budget would have been OK if...

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR

The Fitial administration said the \$164 million appropriations bill passed by the House would've been okay if the Legislature had acted on the measures the Governor's Office earlier proposed, reducing the government's Retirement Fund contribution rate to 11 percent and the unpaid holiday bill.

Thus said Gov. Benigno R. Fitial's press secretary, Charles P. Reyes, in reaction to House Ways and Means Committee chair Ray Yumul's comments that they based the 2008 budget bill on the available resources given them by the Governor's Office.

See \$164M on Page 4

Commander warns of al-Qaida threat to US

By LOLITA C. BALDOR
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

WASHINGTON (AP)—Al-Qaida terrorists may be plotting more urgently to attack the United States to maintain their credibility and ability to recruit followers, the U.S. military commander in charge of domestic defense said Thursday.



Renuart

Air Force Gen. Gene Renuart, chief of the U.S. Northern Command, also told reporters he has not seen any direct threats tied to the U.S. presidential elections. But he said it would be rash to think that such threats are not there.

"We need only to look at Spain and see that they're certainly willing to try to do something that is significant that could affect an election process," Renuart said. "I think it would be imprudent of us to let down our guard believing that if there's no credible threat that you know of today,

See COMMANDER on Page 4

Michael Jackson's lawyer joins Miura defense team

As Saipan legal team declares two-front war

By FERGIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Pop star Michael Jackson's attorney, Mark J. Geragos, has joined Japanese businessman Kazuyoshi Miura's defense team.



Geragos

briefing yesterday at the Hyatt Regency

"Now it's a two-front war," said Miura's attorney, Bruce Berline.

Joined by co-counsels Mark B. Hanson and William Fitzgerald, the three announced Geragos' inclusion in their defense team during a news

Saipan in Garapan.

Berline said that Geragos, whom he described as a very powerful and effective attorney in California, has agreed to represent Miura in the latter's attempt to quash the 1988 arrest warrant against him in California.

Berline said that Geragos will essentially challenge the legality of the 1988 arrest warrant on the same basis that Miura's legal team on Saipan tried to argue

See MICHAEL on Page 4



JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial and Chief Prosecutor Jeffery Warfield Sr., answer questions from the visiting Japanese media on the extradition case filed against 60-year-old Japanese businessman Kazuyoshi Miura during yesterday's press conference at the Governor's conference room on Capital Hill.

Fitial awaiting original copies of Miura's extradition request

By FERGIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial disclosed yesterday that the CNMI government has

already received from the State of California a faxed copy of the extradition request for Japanese businessman Kazuyoshi Miura.

"We have not received the original

copies of the request from California. We expect to receive the original copies shortly next week, about Tuesday, March 11," said Fitial at a press briefing that was jam-packed with Japanese media.

The governor explained that after receiving these original copies, the Office of the Attorney General will review them.

See FITIAL on Page 4

XTERRA athletes descend on Saipan

XTRERRA
SAIPAN

COURSE MAP

Map labels: Banzai Cliff, MARPI, Bird Island, Old Man By The Sea, Marine Beach, Forbidden Island, Dandan Beach, AIRPORT, Agingan Beach, Laolao Bay, CAPITOL HILL, TANAPAG, Managaha Island.

LEGEND

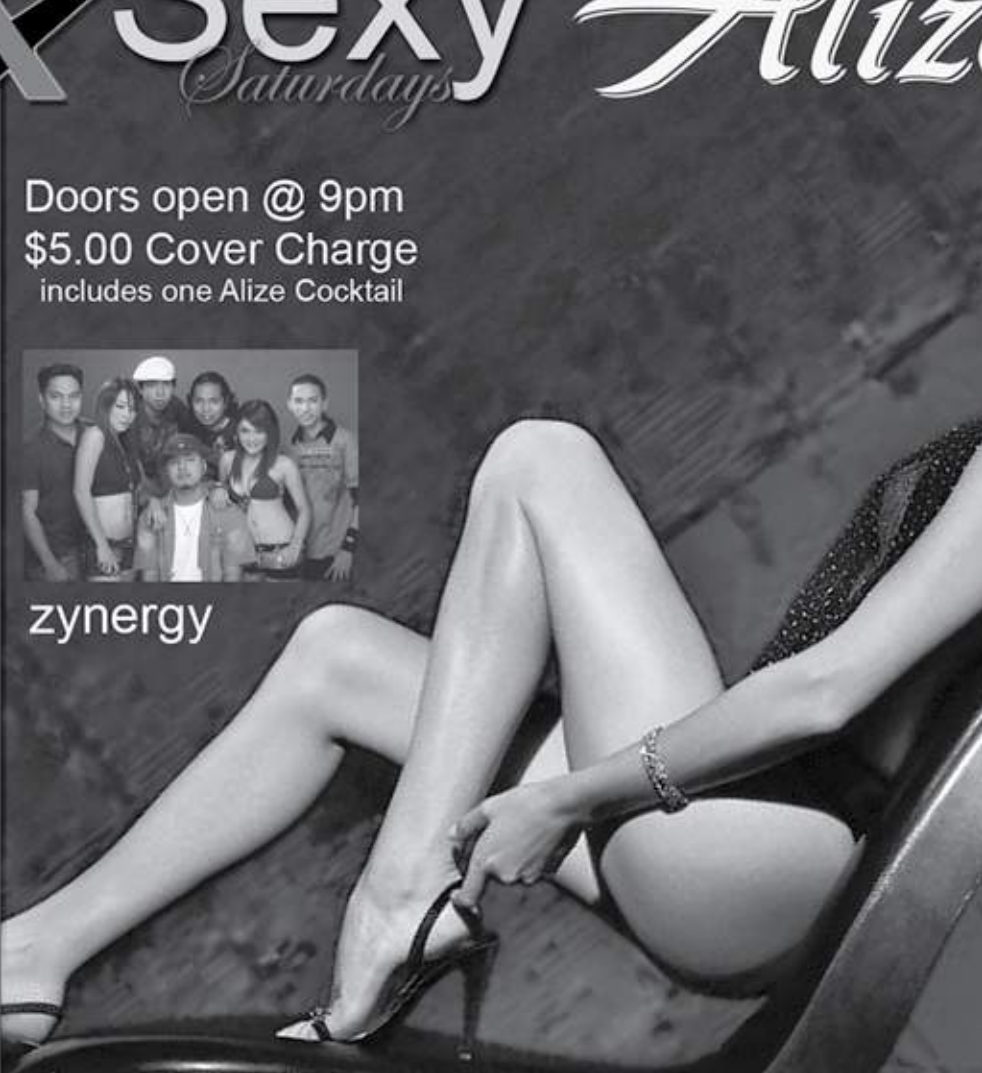
- Start/Finish
- Bike
- Bike Direction
- Swim
- Run


Wolf outlined three reasons

A couple of weeks ago, Heather Kennedy and Kieran Daly of the local triathlon community also were bitten by dogs while training in China Town and Upper Agigi Road. **(Mark Rabago)**

"We believe that with this first-hand experience, our offshore office staff gains valuable knowledge that will help them promote our islands more effectively," said MVA managing director Perry Tenorio. "Overall, the group concluded that it was a very 'fruitful' tour. They now have the experience and better understanding of the destinations and also secured the contact information of various industry partners." (*MVA*)

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Gonzalez alleges two other applicants treated like him

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
rianne_pangelinan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

An applicant for a position at the Northern Marianas College who alleged that he has been discriminated against claims that two other applicants were treated like him.

John Gonzales, who was applying for the position of director for the Office Of Institutional Effectiveness, said that he knows of two other people who have applied at the college and their applications tossed aside.

"I know of two other applicants who [applied at NMC and] were treated in exactly the same way," Gonzalez said.

He declined to identify the two applicants, for now.

He said just like him, they had claimed that their applications were not acknowledged by the college.

Gonzalez said he has filed a complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the Honolulu regional office called him a couple of hours later acknowledging receipt of his complaint.

He says EEOC is asking him to compile further evidence and articulate the circumstances relating to the "unfair, rigged, deceitful, dishonest" hiring practices at NMC.

"There are reasons why I am doing this. One reason is to defend principle and justice. I want to make sure the recruitment process by NMC and by all agencies—whether private or public—are transparent, honest, and fair," Gonzalez said.

The job eventually went to William Castro, former chief planner at the Guam Public School System. Castro will serve a three-year contract and will get up to \$60,000 a year.

Gonzalez explained that the recruitment process requires basic requirements such as acknowledging the application intake, scheduling applicants for interview, rating the applicants amongst the rest and having a score based on the performance of the interviews.

He said nothing was done to the application he submitted to NMC.

"I have a stronger conviction or reason to believe the recruitment process by [NMC president] Carmen Fernandez was suspect, rigged deceitful, dishonest. As a professional, as she claims to be, the process is substandard. Especially for a postsecondary educational institution that is expected to defend and promote educated intelligence and honesty," Gonzalez said.

Gonzalez claims that it is not about NMC hiring another applicant over him that has gotten him riled up.

"I have applied for two other positions in the past. And everything was done fairly and squarely. Although I was chosen for neither positions, I understood that it was fair and square. I did

not contest it," Gonzalez said.

He said that with the two agencies he had applied with, his application intake was acknowledged, he was interviewed, and was aware of the rating and standing.

"None of these were done by the college. And it's really sad, especially because I am an alumni [sic] of the college," Gonzalez said.

He thinks that he is "certainly qualified with unquestionable loyalty to the institution."

Gonzalez accused NMC of being in direct violation of the NMC mandate as an equal employment opportunity employer, "especially as a federal grantee."

He added that the illegal hiring at NMC that the college had disclosed during a recent press conference illustrates the ongoing manipulation of the application recruitment process, which he said "has got to stop!"

"This mismanagement and malpractice is only the tip of the iceberg that will eventually lead to the college losing its accreditation," Gonzalez said.

Defibrillators eyed for sites outside hospital

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
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REPORTER

Since the sudden death of veteran cager Rick Alegre, some concerned residents have been wondering if whether having a defibrillator in sports facilities or at least during sporting events might have improved his chances of survival.

Pacific Development Inc.'s Mario Espeleta believes that having one on hand would have boosted "even by a slight chance" Alegre's odds of survival.

Aqua Resort Club coach Emi Brigino also shared that, although he is not too familiar with the uses of a defibrillator, he thinks that having one on hand would have increased Alegre's chances of survival since the machine is often used to revive heart failure.

Alegre died in February, in what could have been a possible heart attack, while playing for Aqua Resort Club against Hyatt Regency Saipan in the 2nd Annual HANMI Cup Inter-Hotel Basketball League at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

According to Department of Public Health director of medical affairs Edward Cornette, "Mr. Alegre would have needed an autopsy or post-mortem examination to determine the precise cause of death. It would be inappropriate to assume that an AED [automatic external defibrillator] would have been of benefit."

Public Health medical director Richard Brostrom echoed this, saying, "It would be medically inappropriate to speculate on whether Mr. Alegre would have survived if an AED had been placed in the gym."

An AED is a computerized medical device that checks a person's heart rhythm, recognizes a rhythm that requires a shock, advises when a shock is needed, then prompts the rescuer to take the proper steps.

Dianne Atkins, M.D., a cardiologist at the University of Iowa Children's Hospital, described AEDs as "instant help for heart attack victims."

American Red Cross execu-

tive director John Hirsch said that, if indeed Alegre's cause of death was a sudden cardiac arrest, then having a defibrillator closer "would have improved his chances" of survival.

Brostrom said that DPH is working with the Red Cross to place AED units in various locations in the CNMI where large numbers of people gather, as well as in emergency medical services.

"Other locations would likely include the Man'amko Center and the Ada airport. Other locations have been discussed as well. However, locating expensive AED units in every location where athletic events occur is not feasible presently," said Brostrom.

He said that during early discussions with Red Cross, it was determined that the Ada Gymnasium "will very likely be included."

Hirsch said that there are presently ten defibrillators throughout the island. The American Red Cross will soon be do-

nating six more of these units throughout the island, he added.

Cornette said that AEDs being available to the public is not a new idea.

"Do they assist in survival? Yes and no. Automatic defibrillators are designed to detect a cardiac irregularity known as 'ventricular fibrillation' which is disorganized mechanical functioning of the heart as a result of an electrical abnormality," said Cornette.

He said that ventricular fibrillation is the most common cause for cardiac arrest out of the hospital setting.

"However, there are other reasons why someone may sustain a cardiac arrest in which an automatic defibrillator would be of no value," he said.

The cost of an AED unit is usually around \$2,000. Training for the unit is nominal, but not required.

Espeleta suggests that sporting events and facilities should be equipped with emergency equipment and backup if in case an incident occurs that requires emergency assistance.

See HOSPITAL on Next Page



Brostrom



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Pacific fishery council to meet in Guam, Saipan

The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council will convene March 17 and 18 at the Hilton Hotel in Guam, and March 20 and 21 at the Fiesta Resort and Spa Saipan in the CNMI.

The Council is scheduled to discuss and may take action on Hawaii-based swordfish fishing limits; main Hawaiian Islands bottomfishing risk analysis; Mariana Archipelago longline and purse seine fish-

ing closed areas; American Samoa purse seine fishing closed areas; American Samoa longline limited entry program modifications; a process for reviewing and implementing Community Development Proj-

ects; Pacific pelagic squid permits; and annual catch limits.

Public comments will be taken prior to decision-making on these issues.

The Council is the policy-making agency for fisheries management in

federal waters surrounding Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, Commonwealth of the Mariana Islands and the US Pacific remote island areas.

For more information and a complete agenda, go to www.wpcouncil.org or contact the Council in Hawaii at 808 522-8220 or info.wpcouncil@noaa.gov; on Guam at 649-3150 or 688-6400; or in the CNMI at 322-9830 or 287-9482. (PR)

COMMANDER

From Page 1

there won't be something tomorrow."

While he said that U.S. authorities have thwarted attacks on a number of occasions, he said terrorist cells may be working harder than ever to plot high-impact events. He did not point to any specific intelligence that authorities have received but said the "chatter" they are hearing "gives me no reason to believe they're going to slow down" in their efforts to target the U.S.

"If an organization like that is to maintain credibility and continue to grow more of its extremists, it has to show tangible results," Renuart said. "So I think there may be a certain sense of urgency among that organization to have an effect. So it would tell me that they're trying harder."

Asked about the terror threat, Homeland Security spokesman Russ Knocke said, "There continues to

be no credible information telling us about an imminent threat to homeland at this time."

In July, U.S. intelligence analysts, in a threat assessment, concluded that al-Qaida had rebuilt its operating capability to a level not seen since just before the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. The report said the terror network had regrouped along the Afghan-Pakistan border, but it also noted that officials knew of no specific credible threat of an attack on U.S. soil.

About the same time, Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff raised eyebrows when he said he had a "gut feeling" that the United States faced a heightened risk of attack.

On Thursday, however, Chertoff said the U.S. has successfully lowered the risk of a large-scale domestic terrorist attack for the near future.

"We have significantly reduced the risk of a major attack in the short term," Chertoff told a group of editors at The Washington Post in a report posted online Thursday.

Chertoff said the U.S. effort was one of the reasons there has been an increase in attacks by Islamic extremists in Europe. Improvements in U.S. traveler screening and border security have shifted the focus of al-Qaida operatives and sympathizers to Europe, he said.

Renuart said that of the more than a dozen daily events that Northern Command responds to - ranging from natural disasters to threats - two or three may have the potential to be terrorist incidents.

The chatter, which included public audio and video tapes released on the Internet by al-Qaida leaders, suggests that they are looking for a way to have a big impact again, he said. Pressed for details, he said the chatter was more common but "whether that's louder or more ominous, I'm not sure I'm ready to draw that conclusion."

He did, however, repeat his assertion - which he first made in July - that he believes there are al-Qaida cells or sympathizers within the

United States.

President Bush, in a speech Thursday, also said the United States remained under threat from terrorists. Marking the fifth anniversary of the creation of the Homeland Security Department, Bush said that in the aftermath of the Sept. 11 attacks "it was hard to imagine that we would reach this milestone without another attack on our homeland."

Yet he said, "On this anniversary, we must also remember that the danger to our country has not passed. Since the attacks of 9/11, the terrorists have tried to strike our homeland again and again. We've disrupted numerous planned attacks - including a plot to fly an airplane into the tallest building on the West Coast and another to blow up passenger jets headed for America across the Atlantic Ocean."

Bush said the lesson is clear: "The enemy remains active, deadly in its intent - and in the face of this danger, the United States must never let down its guard."

HOSPITAL

From Page 3

He added that \$2,000 for a single unit is no money when it comes to saving a person's life. "You cannot put a price on a person's life," said Espeleta.

Cornette said that DPH is always on-the-ready to conduct educational seminars regarding health care issues.

"If any organization is in need of health care seminars please do not hesitate to contact the Department of Public Health. I will personally assist in obtaining the information requested," he said.

Brostrom said he played basketball with Alegre for many years.

"We hope to continue to work to make the CNMI a healthier place for all who live here," he added.

\$164M

From Page 1

"Think of it this way: Under our plan, we proposed \$160 million with an 11 percent contribution rate and an unpaid holiday austerity provision. Yumul rejected that and many months later proposed \$164 million at 18 percent without an unpaid holiday provision after we have lost so much savings that could've been enjoyed if we passed the 11 percent rate and unpaid holidays earlier," said Reyes in an e-mail to the *Saipan Tribune*.

Because of the Legislature's

non-action on the two provisions, the government has been losing \$400,000 for each paid holiday since the current fiscal year started in October 2007, he said.

"Unfortunately, the Legislature disregarded some of those assumptions even then, back in September of 2007. For example, the 15th Legislature, right before the November 2007 elections, refused to consider the unpaid holiday proposal, an assumption explicitly made in the governor's proposed and submitted budget," Reyes said.

The governor's press secretary suspects that the Legislature's inaction on

the two provisions, especially the very unpopular unpaid holiday proposal, were made because they were afraid that it might cost them votes during the election.

"They refused to consider or propose any alternative to the unpaid holiday idea because this was politically unpopular and many legislators were operating on political assumptions rather than realistic and reasonable economic assumptions," he said.

Reyes said the Legislature also cannot expect to have a balanced budget if it replaced the governor's proposed 11 percent employer contribution rate for the Northern Mariana Islands Retirement Fund.

ment Fund.

"Another assumption was the 11 percent NMIRF employer contribution rate. This assumption was also rejected and replaced with a significantly higher rate of 18 percent, which dramatically changed a number of assumptions because if you change one part of the plan, you have to also change other parts to balance out. The Legislature has not done this. They cannot just say we are using your own revenue projections when they have rejected some of the critical assumptions of the original proposal and when their continued inaction has resulted in a whole set of other assumptions because of changed

circumstances as time goes by," he said.

The 2008 budget bill approved by the House last Monday appropriates \$164.25 million for all government agencies under the General Fund and \$3.23 million for the Department of Public Lands, which is funded by income from leases of public lands.

In addition, the bill distributes \$5.117 million of Compact Impact funds, or reimbursement money from the federal government to the CNMI for hosting Micronesian citizens.

The budget will apply to the current fiscal year, which runs from Oct. 1, 2007 to Sept. 30, 2008.

FITIAL

From Page 1

"The review may take about a day and not more than two days. And then they will recommend to me whether I should sign it or not," Fitial said.

When asked if he is going to sign the arrest warrant for Miura's extradition, the chief executive said he will if the papers are legally sufficient.

Fitial said he doesn't have any doubts about the authenticity of the faxed document.

"But that doesn't mean anything because I still cannot act until I receive the original copies. So my doubt is still

a faxed doubt," said the governor, eliciting laughter from the media.

Fitial said the Commonwealth has always remained confident that Miura's arrest was lawful. He said the AGO followed appropriate CNMI law and procedures when Miura was arrested.

"We welcomed the challenge to make the arrest and we have now been validated by the CNMI Superior Court," said Fitial, alluding to Associate Judge Ramona Manglona's ruling on Wednesday that the arrest was lawful.

The governor said that, although Miura's counsel attempted to challenge the extradition based on double

jeopardy, Judge Manglona was "thoroughly prepared and correctly focused on the proper issues" while not allowing the defense to proceed on matters that can only be determined in the California courts.

"Now that Judge Manglona has ruled that Mr. Miura has been lawfully arrested and is being legally detained, we can move forward with the extradition process," Fitial said.

The next step, he said, is to process the receipt of a formal extradition request from California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Chief Prosecutor and acting Attorney General Jeffery Warfield Sr. said that if Fitial signs an arrest warrant for extra-

dition, Miura has to be served with that document.

"Essentially, he will be arrested pursuant to that governor's warrant. After he is served with that document, he has to be taken back before the court," Warfield said.

The chief prosecutor said the court will then advise the defendant that he is now being arrested under the governor's warrant for extradition and advise him of his rights at that point.

"Again he will have the right to have an attorney, he will have the right to contest the lawfulness of the arrest under the governor's warrant," he said.

Warfield said Miura's option is to agree to return to California based on

the governor's warrant.

"But he still can challenge it. Even after the governor's warrant is issued, he will still have that right," he said.

If Miura's lawyers don't challenge the extradition, Warfield said they will notify the authorities in California that he has been arrested under the governor's warrant in the CNMI and is awaiting extradition.

He said Gov. Schwarzenegger will then be expected to send personnel to Saipan to take Miura to California.

With respect to the scheduled March 19 hearing in the Superior Court, Warfield said the hearing is only to determine whether or not an actual warrant has already been signed.

MICHAEL

From Page 1

before Superior Court associate judge Ramona V. Manglona.

"Why? This warrant is no good. It is ineffective, null and void," he said.

He said they are expecting Geragos to start working on a motion to quash this morning, Saturday (Saipan time).

Berline explained that Geragos will

just be dealing with the courts in California.

"His sole purpose is to quash the 1988 warrant. If that warrant goes away, California most certainly must revoke its request for extradition because there is no basis for extradition," he said.

The defense lawyer said they expect the California courts to rule that California may not and cannot prosecute Miura. "In fact they cannot even charge

him through an indictment," Berline said.

The lawyer said that they will continue to fight here on Saipan. He said they are looking into whether to appeal Manglona's ruling to the CNMI Supreme Court.

"But again we have to take into consideration the time constraint that we are under right now, especially in light of the fact that Gov. [Arnold] Schwarzenegger has faxed certain

documents [to the CNMI Governor's Office]," Berline said.

Besides Michael Jackson, Geragos client list includes Academy award-winning actress Winona Ryder, hip hop star Nate Dogg, former congressman Gary Condit, and former president Bill Clinton's brother, Roger Clinton.

As a trial lawyer, he gained national reputation through back-to-back state and federal court jury trial acquittals for renowned Whitewater figure Susan

McDougal, the former business partner of former president Bill Clinton.

Geragos has previously been named "Trial Lawyer of the Year" by the LA Criminal Courts Bar Association, this making him one of only two lawyers ever named Lawyer of the Year in both the criminal and civil arenas. The other lawyer was Johnnie Cochran.

Geragos has reportedly been voted by his peers every year as one of LA's Superlawyers.

March is American Red Cross Month

By **RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN**
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REPORTER

March has been declared the American Red Cross Month during a proclamation signing by Gov. Benigno R. Fitial yesterday morning on Capital Hill. The event kicks off a month-long celebration that will be capped with the annual Red Cross walkathon.

The signing ceremony also reiterated the American Red Cross NMI Chapter's mission of providing essential services to the

people in the Northern Marianas with the help of generous donors throughout the communities.

American Red Cross executive director John Hirsch said that the annual American Red Cross walk-a-thon has been pushed to April 12 instead of March. The annual walkathon is the second biggest fundraiser for the organization.

President George Bush kicked off the nationwide observance with his own proclamation signing on Feb. 29, 2008, honoring the charitable

organization which dates back from the days of late Gov. Theodore Roosevelt.

"While President Bush does it nationally, we're doing this here locally," Hirsch said.

The proclamation, read aloud by Emergency Services director JD Torres, stated that for 30 years, residents of the CNMI have relied on the expertise of the American Red Cross in disaster relief.

Each year, the NMI chapter responds to many disasters, including house or apartment fires, typhoons, and other natural and human-caused disasters.

Torres said that "the NMI Chapter on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota makes every effort to save lives long before tragedy strikes by helping individuals and entire communities learn to prepare for disasters."

The Red Cross also plays a part in preparing people to save lives through first aid and CPR training, water safety, and use of automated external defibrillators to save victim of sudden cardiac arrest.

"The American Red Cross is entrusted with providing volunteer aid in times of war to the sick and wounded of the armed forces. Staff members deploy with our Armed Forces to provide emergency communications and a caring presence to service men and women separated from their



RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial declared March as American Red Cross month during a proclamation signing yesterday. In the photo are Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Perry Tenorio, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, Lt. Gov. Tim Villagomez, American Red Cross executive director John Hirsch and the American Red Cross team.

families," Torres said.

"Without the help of the NMI Chapter volunteers, who constitute 97 percent of the total local Red Cross work force, the Chapter would not be able to fulfill the humanitarian mission that is the cornerstone of the organization."

Nearly 1,400 people have enrolled in the American Red Cross of Health and Safety courses here in the NMI.

The NMI chapter has also sent more than 80 emergency messages this past year to active duty personnel and their families.

"We are grateful for the tireless work of the volunteers and employees of the local Red Cross and those who have answered the call to serve" greater causes than self.

Hirsch said that after the catastrophic and long-lasting effects of Hurricane Katrina, "Red Cross

has realized that no one agency or government can do it alone and that partnerships are so important to the...safety of the people that live in the community."

Gov. Fitial is encouraging all residents of the Commonwealth to support "this organization's noble humanitarian mission."

Four reappointed to government agencies

Three members of the Museum Board of Governors and one from the Commonwealth Government Employees' Credit Union Board of Directors were reappointed to their positions last Tuesday.

In a letter signed by Lt. Gov. Timothy P. Villagomez, Scott Russel, Michael Fleming and Cecilia T. Celes were reappointed to the Museum Board of Governors.

Russel represents the business community, while Celis is part of the Commonwealth Council for Arts & Culture. Fleming, meanwhile, has a background in anthropology and archeology. Each of them will serve another four-year term.

Russel's term will expire on Feb. 26, 2012, while Flem-

ing's will be until Sept. 17, 2011. Celes' new appointment lasts until Sept. 17, 2011.

Villagomez also reappointed Frances D. Castro to the Commonwealth Government Employees' Credit Union Board of Directors. Like the other three, Castro will also serve another four-year term that expires on March 8, 2012.

Villagomez said he and the governor are aware of the important work before the Museum Board of Governors and the Commonwealth Government Employees' Credit Union Board of Directors but they have every confidence that the four board members will continue to conscientiously devote their best efforts in the best of all members. *(Mark Rabago)*

US Navy team clears Yap harbor of dangerous mine

A six-person U.S. Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal team from Guam safely detonated a World War II era naval mine in Yap on March 4.

A marine biologist residing in Yap had discovered the suspicious object while diving. The horned device was moored at a depth of 110 feet below sea level at the mouth of the Waneday channel leading into Colonia Harbor.

After locating and identifying the mine as a threat to divers and marine navigation, the U.S. Embassy coordinated with director of the FSM Office of Environment and Emergency Management Andrew Yatilman, Yap State government officials, and the Commander, United States Naval Forces Marianas to dispatch the EOD Team.

A U.S. military C-40 aircraft landed in Yap on March 3, bringing the six Navy ordnance disposal experts, their diving equipment, and explosives and other materials needed for the job. They met with a Yap State task force convened by Gov. Sebastian Anefal to address the emergency, then proceeded to

the mine's location for an onsite inspection. Yap State media issued a series of public announcements strictly prohibiting all diving activities in the immediate and surrounding areas.

On the basis of the EOD Team's assessments and public safety and environmental considerations, Anefal gave the order for detonation.

Although a large crowd of spectators gathered near Colonia Harbor in anticipation of an explosion, the depth of the device, combined with the specialized expertise and careful operations of the Navy divers, resulted in a detonation marked by nothing more than a little surface turbulence.

Larry Raigetal, director of the Yap Department of Youth and Civic Affairs, commented afterward: "Everyone is just happy to have this hazard out of the way."

Raigetal's staff is now working on a public education campaign using Yap radio and television broadcast media to alert the public to the continuing danger posed by unexploded ordnance. *(USN)*



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Opinion

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EDITORIAL

Primarily confusing

Hillary Rodham Clinton is celebrating her victory over Barack Obama in Texas on Tuesday, though it's not certain that it was really a victory, because while she won the primary, she has likely lost the state's subsequent caucus. She's still about 105 delegates shy of Obama, but the count seems to vary depending on who's doing the counting. In the end, the Democratic nominee will probably be decided by party insiders called superdelegates.

Is all that perfectly clear?

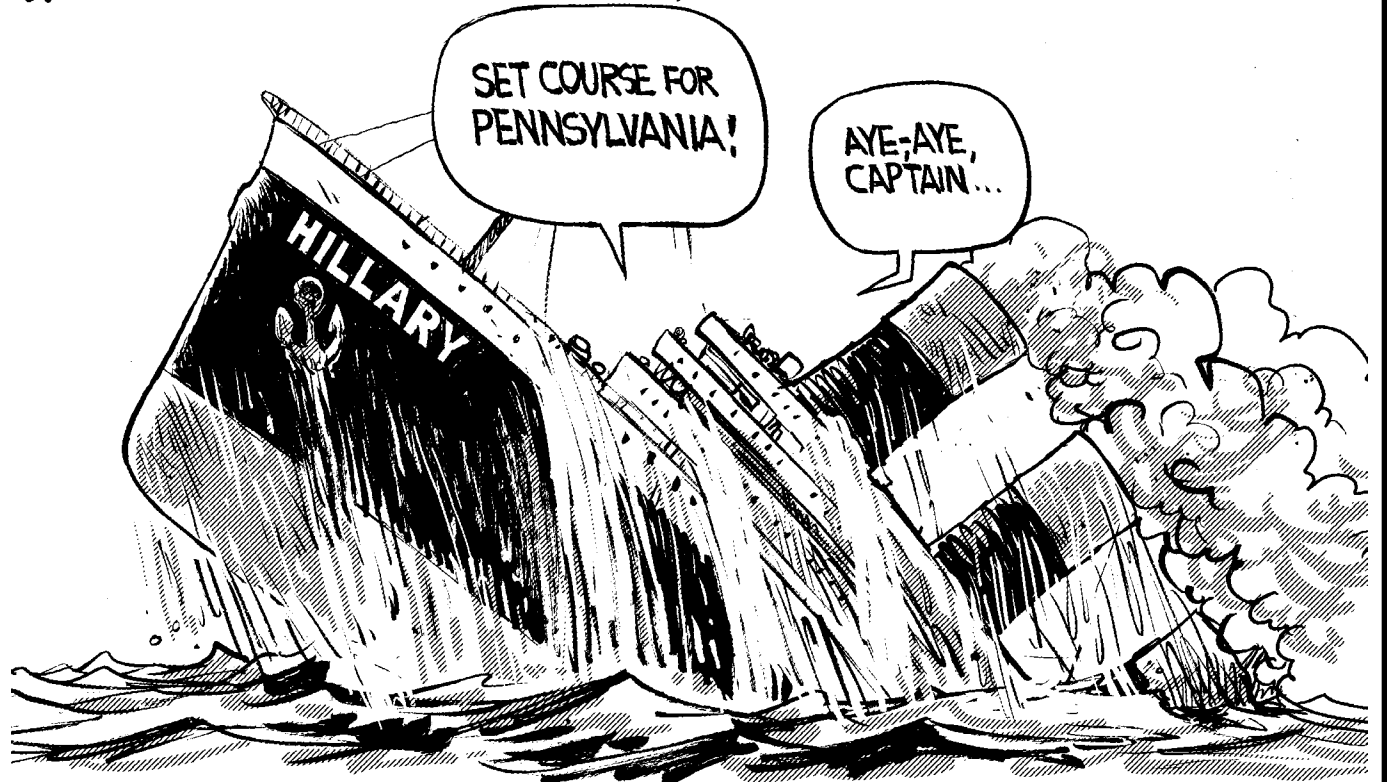
Americans choose a president every four years, but seldom have the odd anachronisms of our democracy been as plainly exposed as they have been in the 2008 campaign. Few Americans and even fewer foreigners fully understand this arcane process, and nobody can blame them. Some states choose a nominee based on caucuses, others rely on primaries and some, like Texas, use both. At the end of the voting, the nominee isn't really chosen by the people but by state delegates at the parties' national conventions. About a fifth of the delegates at this year's Democratic convention will be unpledged superdelegates who can support whichever candidate they choose rather than being tied to their states' popular vote. After the parties have picked their candidates, the winner of the general election will once again be chosen by conventioners—this time in the Electoral College—rather than voters. This can lead to undemocratic results such as the 2000 presidential race, in which Al Gore won the popular vote but George W. Bush was awarded the presidency.

There is, of course, a simpler way. We could select party nominees by majority vote nationwide, do the same in the general election and skip the conventions. Every once in a while, as in 2000, there are calls to simplify the process. But political inertia is such that they go unheard.

Many Democrats are frustrated by the uncertainty and confusion of the primary campaign, fearing it will put them at a disadvantage during the general election when they face the Republican Party's clear choice, John McCain. They needn't fret. The bonus of a close contest is that Clinton and Obama will be squeezed and sniffed like supermarket melons, their ripeness tested by dozens of debates and the pesticides in their past exposed by each other long before McCain gets a chance to start digging. No matter which one wins the nomination, the country will know precisely what it's getting.

The sustained pressure of the 2008 campaign thus provides a redeeming rationale for our nominating process: It has separated the sturdy from the unelectable. Just ask John Edwards.

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BRACKINS RICHMOND TIMES-DISPATCH
3/08

THE TITANIC RESUREACES

Renewing 'Made in the USA'

Last month, another manufacturer announced that it was closing in my home state of Ohio, the 82nd in the past 12 months. This time it was Johnson Rubber, a 113-year-old maker of floor mats and rubber boots for steering columns.

Tuesday's Ohio Democratic primary has given these plant closings national attention, and both Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama have laid out plans for reviving manufacturing. But critics dismiss these efforts (as a Feb. 24 Post article noted) as pandering and ineffective.

Neither critique is fair. Yes, the manufacturing sector has been hammered with the loss of 3.7 million jobs over the past seven years. But manufacturing remains vital to our nation's economy. One-tenth of all U.S. jobs are in the manufacturing sector—good jobs that pay 20 percent more than the national average. Manufacturing accounts for 12 percent of gross domestic product and over half of our national spending on research and development.

Continued hemorrhaging is not inevitable. A nation that can shoot an errant satellite out of the sky could build a high-productivity, high-wage manufacturing sector that also meets critical national goals such as combating global warming, modernizing infrastructure and maintaining a defense industrial base. Manufacturing and service firms can use a "high-road" production process that harnesses everyone's knowledge—that of production workers as well as top executives and investors—to achieve innovation, quality and quick responses to unexpected situations.

How do we get there? Start with more investment in education, training, and research and development. Yet education alone will not allow firms to overcome the market failures that block adoption of efficient, high-road practices. Nor will it reinvigorate income growth, which for the median college-educated man has risen only half a percent annually since 1973. Similarly, increased R&D spending by itself won't get innovative products to market. Fortunately, high-road producers excel at overcoming the obstacles that have hampered American firms' ability to move from lab to production.

Sens. Clinton and Obama favor investments in infrastructure and alternative energy, which would create many jobs and serve national needs. (Creating renewable capacity to meet 25 percent of U.S. electricity demand would reduce dependence on foreign oil, cut carbon emissions and employ 927,000 people.) Their trade policies begin to provide workers and the environment with protections like those already enjoyed by owners of intellectual property. Broad access to health care would greatly benefit manufacturers, not to mention the rest of the economy.

But more is needed. Competing with low-wage nations is not as daunting as one might think; research by the Michigan Manufactur-

By SUSAN HELPER

Special to The Washington Post

Susan Helper, an economics professor at Case Western Reserve University, is a research associate of the National Bureau of Economic Research. This op-ed is based on research she did for a paper, Renewing U.S. Manufacturing, for the Economic Policy Institute's Agenda for Shared Prosperity.



ing Technology Center suggests that most small manufacturers have costs within 20 percent of their Chinese competitors'. The federal Manufacturing Extension Partnership helps bridge this gap by teaching companies to develop new products, find new markets and operate more efficiently—and it pays for itself in increased tax revenue from the firms it helps. Yet the Bush administration wants to end this program, while Clinton proposes only to retain the current budget of \$90 million and Obama does not mention it at all. We should triple the program's funding—a step that would cost only \$300 million per year.

On a larger scale, rebuilding our neglected infrastructure would create jobs while making the United States more competitive. Public infrastructure—roads, bridges, sewers—is crucial for private productivity. Right now, 27 percent of bridges are structurally deficient and need immediate attention. Future infrastructure needs will change as we take seriously the costs of environmental degradation, with fewer highway expansions and more public transit, for example. We need to get started on this work, which has substantial job-creation potential—as many as 47,000 jobs per billion dollars spent, according to the Economic Policy Institute.

Why not let all the manufacturing jobs disappear and have an economy of just eBays and Googles? Because even the most modern economies cannot thrive without making things. We need manufacturing expertise to cope with events that might present huge technical challenges to our habits of daily living (global warming), leave us unable to buy from abroad (wars) or leave us with nothing to sell that others want. Rather than abandon manufacturing, we could make the sector a showcase that leads the way toward higher productivity and better jobs in the economy as a whole.

Good ideas that will help presidential candidates win in Ohio today can also help America win in the global economy. Let's remember that, long after the votes are counted.

EDITORIAL POLICY

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It's your call, Hillary

Hillary? Hillary?

What? It's 3 a.m.? Yes, I know that. Look, I'm sorry if I woke you up. But you said you were fine with 3 a.m. calls.

I'm calling because we have a serious crisis on our hands. And I thought of you immediately, because you're right, you're the only person who might be able to defuse the situation.

We've got a problem with John McCain, Hillary. Remember him? I know, you've been so busy lately trying to destroy Barack Obama that McCain probably slipped your mind. That's why I had to call.

Hillary, listen: This country could be in serious danger if McCain becomes president. His national security policies are a recipe for endless conflagration, especially in the Middle East. Saying McCain's a "hawk" is an understatement. McCain makes Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld look like cute little parakeets. No kidding. Remember "Bomb, Bomb, Bomb, Bomb Bomb Iran?" Ha ha.

No, no, you're right, it wasn't funny. And by the way, McCain says your Iraq strategy would constitute "surrender ... waving the white flag."

What's that? You don't want to see McCain become president either?

Then withdraw from the Democratic race right now, Hillary.

Whoa! Don't get so irritated. It's just that the longer you stay in, the more help you give McCain and the right.

Stop being so mean? I'm not trying to be mean, Hillary. Please, get yourself another pillow if you want one. You're smart and you're tough, and you've blazed an important trail. But at 3 a.m.—dark-night-of-the-soul time—we need to be realistic.

Let's do the math together. Do you want to go find a calculator? No? Sorry, of course you're good at math.

OK—so before this week's primaries, Obama had 1,192 pledged delegates, and you had 1,036. On Tuesday, you won in Ohio, Texas and Rhode Island, and MSNBC estimates that after the results have been fully tabulated, you'll have eroded Obama's original 156-delegate lead by ... somewhere between seven and 13 pledged delegates.

Whoop-de-do.

What? Oh sure, you did manage to regain some momentum. And yes, I probably wouldn't even have called if it hadn't been for those infamous "red phone" ads you've been running. They're definitely

How many nonbelievers?

Are there more atheists and agnostics in the United States than is commonly supposed? Two studies—last week's U.S. Religious Landscape Survey from the Pew Forum and one published two years ago—suggest so.

The 2006 study from the University of Minnesota does not examine the question of how many nonbelievers there are but rather makes clear the troubling depth of Americans' distrust of them. Asked whether they would disapprove of a child's wish to marry an atheist, 47.6 percent of the 2,000 randomly selected people interviewed said yes. When asked the same question about a Muslim or black person, the respondents' "yes" responses fell to 33.5 percent and 27.2 percent, respectively; the responses dealing with Asian Americans, Hispanics and other groups were lower.

When asked which groups did not share their vision of society, 39.5 percent of those interviewed mentioned atheists—again, a level of distrust far in excess of that shown to other groups. Sociologist Penny Edgell, the study's lead researcher, called the results "a glaring exception to the rule of increasing tolerance over the last 30 years."

The recent study by the Pew Forum reports on the religious affiliations of Americans. It notes that the percentage of self-declared Protestants, although still a bit over 50 percent, is shrinking; that Catholics make up just shy of 25 percent of the population, a figure that would be declining were it not for recent immigrants; and that the number of denominations is rising. The study also notes a significant increase in movement from one religious affiliation to another, with almost half of the 35,000 people who participated in this extensive survey saying that they had switched religions.

Of interest to me is that almost 1 in 6 (16.1 percent) of the respondents said they were not affiliated with any particular religious faith, and this figure rose to 1 in 4 among 18- to 29-year-olds. Of course, unaffiliated does not mean irreligious, but 4 percent of Americans say exactly that, with 1.6 percent and 2.4 percent describing themselves as either atheist or agnostic, respectively. The remaining 12 percent who are unaffiliated are split more or less in half between those who say they are secular and unaffiliated and those who say they are religious but unaffiliated.

Let me put the two studies together and speculate a bit. Given the negative attitudes toward atheists documented in the Minnesota study, and considering that most people probably don't see much

effective ads, Hillary. By suggesting that Obama isn't fit to be commander in chief, you do seem to have shifted the dynamic; exit polls suggest that Ohio and Texas voters who made up their minds at the last minute mostly opted for you.

So is that your campaign's take-away here? That if you go all out to destroy Obama—suggesting he's weak on national security—you'll be able to eke out a few more victories in the primaries that lie ahead?

That's what I was afraid you were thinking. Only a few months ago, you were accusing Obama of attacks on you that came "right out of the Republican playbook." I should have figured you'd be studying that playbook yourself.

For the sake of your country, don't do this. You've got 12 contests remaining before the Democratic convention, and given the complex proportional system for awarding delegates, you'll have to win all 12 by 20-point margins just to break even with Obama in the pledged delegate counts. It's not going to happen. (And don't even think about Florida and Michigan. Trying to change the rules in the middle of the game will tear the Democratic Party in two.)

And as you chase after near-impossibilities, you'll be running a campaign aimed at systematically destroying the reputation of your party's front-runner—the candidate who leads in the overall popular vote as well as the delegate count, the candidate who has shown an impressive ability to win the hearts of independents and even Republicans, the candidate who is attracting new voters in droves, the candidate who voters think stands the best chance of preventing Mr. "Bomb Bomb Iran" from becoming our next president and leading us into a future of endless war.

This week, right-wing radio host Rush Limbaugh urged Republicans to vote for you instead of McCain in Texas and Ohio—because "Obama needs to be bloodied up. Look, half the country already hates Hillary. But nobody hates Obama yet. Hillary is going to be the one to have to bloody him up politically."

You were right all along, Hillary: There is a vast right-wing conspiracy. The thing is, you've just become their not-so-secret weapon.

Here it is at last, Hillary, a genuine test of your ability to lead in a dangerous world. It's too late for you to win the Democratic nomination—but if you stay in the race, you can sure help Obama lose the White House.

By **JOHN ALLEN PAULOS**

Special to the Los Angeles Times

*Paulos is a mathematics professor at Temple University and the author of *Innumeracy and, most recently, Irreligion: A Mathematician Explains Why the Arguments for God Just Don't Add Up.**



advantage in incurring the distrust of their religious neighbors and colleagues, the testimony of many people formally classified as religious is suspect. Some nonbelievers, it seems to me, are likely either to lie and say they belong to some established creed, or to fudge their responses by saying they're spiritual and believe in a nebulously defined God, or are simply unsure.

Whenever surveys, especially surveys of sexual practices, religious beliefs or potentially unpopular opinions, ask people to self-report, the results are dubious. Few American men acknowledged suffering from erectile dysfunction before the introduction of Viagra, yet as ads assure us, millions of motorcycle-riding, party-loving cowboys seem to suffer from it now.

There also is a definitional problem. The question of religious belief is a nuanced one, and different people who hold similar beliefs and are willing to tell the truth will nevertheless give different answers depending on how they interpret necessarily ambiguous questions.

The conclusion I draw is that the number of nonbelievers in a conventionally described God is in the tens of millions and is not limited to angry "neo-atheists" and Madalyn Murray O'Hair clones. Moreover, I think a more fruitful distinction than the one between atheists and theists is the one between those who acknowledge that there are no compelling logical arguments for believing in God (even if they choose to believe anyway) and those who are sure of their God and the literal truth of their particular holy book.

There is a bravery and a wisdom associated with disbelief and honest doubt. As my father used to say, "Uncertainty is the only certainty there is." More biting is William Butler Yeats' line: "The best lack all conviction, while the worst are full of passionate intensity."

By **ROSA BROOKS**

Special to the Los Angeles Times

Brooks is a professor at the Georgetown University Law Center. E-mail Brooks at rbrooks@latimescolumnists.com.



What are you going to do?

Hillary?

Hillary?

A long campaign gives democracy a good workout

By **LIBBY COPELAND**

(C) 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

Yes, it will. The Democratic primary will go on forever and ever. Isn't it *grand*?

Voters, buck up. Superdelegates, gather your strength.

Let the campaign strategists argue over delegate math and let countless talking heads argue over the definition of "going negative." Because the next seven weeks (or more!) may be exhausting, but they might ultimately be good for democracy. And they could be good for the Democratic Party, as well.

All those states that have complained in past election cycles that they don't matter, so much so that this time they moved their primaries up? Looks like they needn't have bothered. Looks like Pennsylvania, with its April 22 primary, will have a crack at the action. Which means more voters weighing in on the Democratic race, which means more power to the people.

So bring it on! Bring on the candidates' newfound love for the Steelers. Bring on the mandatory cheese-steak-eating photo ops. (Tip from John Kerry: Do not ask for Swiss cheese.) Let the most historic primary race in history continue. We see Barack Obama shooting hoops in West Philly with Will Smith. We see Hillary Clinton in an Amish buggy with a guy named Jebediah. We see more people arguing about the issues this race can't help but be about—race and gender, establishment versus youth, the choice (a false choice, really) between judgment and experience. Those arguments aren't bad things, not if folks can find some substance amid the theatrics.

A lot can happen in seven weeks. As Time's Mark Halperin pointed out recently, "It was only eight weeks ago we had the Iowa caucuses." That era seems practically Paleolithic now.

B.I. (Before Iowa)—that was the early phase of the Democratic race, in which Clinton appeared to have the race sewn up. Then there was the second epoch, in which Obama-love made voters (and some say reporters) swoon. If the third and final phase of Obama vs. Clinton is a hard slog, that seems fitting. Such a fascinating election deserves a little more time and contemplation.

Some observers have suggested that big wins for Clinton this week meant good things for Republican nominee-to-be John McCain. It meant Clinton would stay in the race, which meant she and Obama would burn through lots of cash competing for the nomination, leaving McCain to organize his operation and define himself for voters. But here's another take: McCain now disappears from the news for seven weeks.

"When the spotlight is on you, you benefit from it," says Democratic consultant Tad Devine, who's neutral in this contest. Devine says much depends on the tenor of the attacks between Clinton and Obama. Thus far, he argues, the attacks have been neither vicious nor personal. They've merely been "inevitable." It is only if the tone gets significantly nastier that McCain benefits, Devine says.

So the Democratic race keeps on keepin' on, and in the meantime, voters are left with the image of McCain meeting with George W. Bush this week and receiving the president's endorsement. For better or for worse.

Which is not to say every Democrat should be happy about another round of Obama vs. Clinton. Far from it.

"You know, Punxsutawney Hill just saw her shadow," Obama supporter Jamal Simmons said on CNN after Clinton took Texas, predicting a long, painful winter. "At some point, we've got to make a decision."






Sure thing. Just not *quite* yet.

Copeland is a Washington Post reporter.

Sattelite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
				
Partly sunny with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly sunny with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲82° ▼75°	▲83° ▼75°	▲85° ▼76°	▲85° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	T'Storms	▲85 ▼80
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲86 ▼77
Yap	Mostly Cloudy	▲86 ▼76
Chuuk	Mostly Cloudy	▲88 ▼77
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	▲82 ▼72
Kosrae	Mostly Cloudy	▲85 ▼73
Majuro	Cloudy	▲85 ▼75

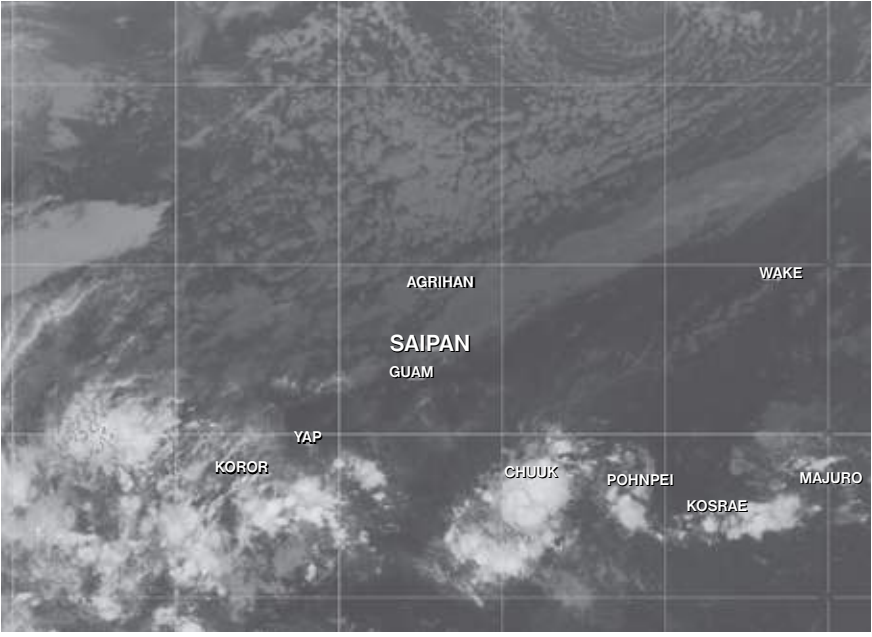
Around The Globe

Auckland	Mostly Sunny	▲71 ▼58
Beijing	Cloudy	▲59 ▼42
Hong Kong	Cloudy	▲73 ▼65
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	▲82 ▼68
London	Showers	▲50 ▼37
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	▲74 ▼53
Manila	Cloudy	▲85 ▼74
Melbourne	Partly Sunny	▲84 ▼67
Miami	Thunderstorms	▲77 ▼52
New York	Rain	▲54 ▼35
Osaka	Mostly Sunny	▲47 ▼35
Paris	Cloudy	▲48 ▼42
Pusan	Mostly Sunny	▲55 ▼37
Rome	Mostly Cloudy	▲52 ▼42
Salem	Mostly Cloudy	▲57 ▼32
San Francisco	Partly Sunny	▲66 ▼46
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	▲50 ▼28
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	▲54 ▼38
Washington, DC	Rain	▲56 ▼30

Tides

Saipan Harbor		
2:04AM Today	Low Tide:	0.0 Feet
8:22AM Today	High Tide:	2.0 Feet
2:29PM Today	Low Tide:	0.6 Feet
8:10PM Today	High Tide:	2.0 Feet

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, FRIDAY, MAR. 7, 2008
Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.
A cold front extends southwestward from 25N167E to 20N158E then continues as a shear line over Saipan at 15N146E to 13N140E to beyond 130E at 12N. Extensive cloudiness and scattered showers are found along and up to 200 miles of the cold front and the shear line. Convergent trade-winds are triggering scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms south of Koror and Yap, between the equator and 7N from 130E to 140E. A surface trough located between Chuuk and Pohnpei extends from 10N155E to 2N152E. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms are occurring within 200 miles of the trough. convergent low-level winds east and south of Kosrae are generating scattered showers within 50 miles of a line from 5N171E to 5N165E to 3N165E to 3N163E.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:30AM	6:26PM
Sunday	6:29AM	6:26PM
Monday	6:28AM	6:26PM
Tuesday	6:28AM	6:27PM
Wednesday	6:27AM	6:27PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	6:35AM	6:56PM
Sunday	7:15AM	7:52PM
Monday	7:57AM	8:51PM
Tuesday	8:42AM	9:52PM
Wednesday	9:32AM	10:56PM

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 - SAMUT SARI Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
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- Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
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 - Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
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DEPARTURES	ARRIVALS
Saipan-Rota CO 9313 8:30am 9:05am 3,4,7	Rota-Saipan CO 9598 11:10am 11:45am 1,2,6
Saipan-Guam CO9317 5:00am 5:50am Daily CO9597 8:30am 9:20am 1,2,5,6 CO9313 8:30am 10:00am 3,4,7 via Rota CO9601 12:30pm 1:20pm Daily CO9603 3:30pm 4:20pm Daily CO9605 6:30pm 7:20pm Daily CO9599 9:30pm 10:20pm Daily	Guam-Saipan CO 9316 2:30am 3:20am Daily CO9596 7:00am 7:50am Daily CO9598 10:15am 11:45am 1,2,6 via Rota CO9600 10:45am 11:35am 3,4,5,7 CO9602 2:00pm 2:50pm Daily CO9604 5:00pm 5:50pm Daily CO9606 8:00pm 8:50pm Daily
Saipan-Narita NW 078 8:25am 1:30pm Daily via Nagoya NW 075 4:50pm 7:30pm Daily	Narita-Saipan NW 076 10:35am 3:05pm Daily NW 077 6:15pm 1:10am+1 Daily via Nagoya
Saipan-Osaka NW 083 4:30pm 7:25pm Daily	Osaka-Saipan NW 084 10:40am 3:10pm Daily
Saipan-Nagoya NW 078 8:25am 11:05am Daily	Nagoya-Saipan NW 077 8:45pm 1:10am+1 Daily
Saipan-Manila CO 895 4:45pm 6:35pm 6 CO 895 6:45pm 8:35pm 3	Manila-Saipan CO 890 9:15am 2:55pm 6 CO 890 11:45am 5:35pm 3
Saipan-Seoul OZ 604 2:10am 6:00am 1 OZ 604 2:40am 6:30am 2,3,4,5,6,7 OZ 606 3:30pm 7:00pm 2,4,6,7	Seoul-Saipan OZ 605 9:00am 2:30pm 2,4,6,7 OZ 603 7:40pm 1:00am+1 7 OZ 603 8:10pm 1:30am+1 1,2,3,4,5,6
Saipan-Busan OZ 608 4:00am 7:35am 1,4,5,7	Busan-Saipan OZ 607 9:30pm 2:50am+1 3,4,6,7
Saipan-Guanzhou CZ 3008 5:00am 8:00am 2,6	Guanzhou-Saipan CZ 3007 8:00pm 4:00am+1 1,5
Saipan-Shanghai MU 590 4:20am 7:00am 2,6	Shanghai-Saipan MU 589 8:05pm 3:00am+1 1,5
Guam-Manila CO 891 6:00am 10:30am 3 via Yap and Koror CO 893 6:30am 8:05am 6 CO 893 8:25am 10:00am 2,7 CO 893 5:50pm 9:10pm 5 via Koror CO 933 8:00pm 9:40pm Daily PR 111 6:00am 7:45am 1,2,4,6,7	Manila-Guam CO 894 11:20am 4:55pm 2,7 CO 894 7:45pm 1:20am+1 6 CO 892 9:45pm 5:25am+1 3 via Koror CO 892 9:45pm 6:30am+1 3 via Koror and Yap CO 892 10:10pm 5:30am+1 5 via Koror CO 934 11:10pm 4:40am+1 Daily PR 110 10:15pm 4:00am+1 1,3,5,6,7
Guam-Hongkong CO 909 7:45pm 10:40pm 1,5	Hongkong-Guam CO 910 11:40pm 6:20am+1 1,5
Guam-Rota CO 9598 10:15am 10:45am 1,2,6	Rota-Guam CO 9313 9:30am 10:00am 3,4,7

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; PR: Philippine Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CA: Air China; NW: Northwest; JO: Japan Airlines; OZ: Asiana; MU: China Eastern ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota				FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 100 7:00am 7:30am Daily				FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 100 7:50am 8:20am Daily				FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota				FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 200 9:00am 9:30am Daily				FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
FRE 200 9:50am 10:15am Daily				Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
Guam-Rota				FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 300 4:00pm 4:30pm Daily				FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 300 4:50pm 5:25pm Daily				FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
Saipan-Rota				FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 400 6:00pm 6:30pm Daily				FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 400 6:45pm 7:15pm Daily				FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian				FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 101 6:45am 6:55am Daily				FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 103 7:30am 7:40am Daily				FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 105 8:00am 8:10am Daily				FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 107 8:40am 8:50am Daily				FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily
FRE 109* 9:10am 9:20am Daily							
FRE 111* 10:45am 10:55am Daily							



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Schedule of Religious Services													
CATHOLIC													
Mt. Carmel Cathedral Sunday Mass: 6am, 9am, 11am and 6pm Monday-Saturday: 6am Wednesday: 6am and 6pm													
Korean Center Sunday: 10:30am Wednesday: 10am Thursday-Friday: 8pm Saturday: 3pm and 7:30pm													
Kristo Rai Parish Sunday Mass: 6am, 8am and 9:30am Monday- Saturday: 6am Wednesday: 6am and 6pm Saturday: 6am and 6pm													
Nuestra Senora De Soledad Parish Wednesday Mass: 6pm First Friday Healing Mass: 6pm Saturday Mass: 6pm Sunday Masses: 7:30am & 9am													
Saint Jude Parish Sunday: 6am, 8am, 10am Wednesday and Thursday: 6pm													
San Antonio Parish Sunday: 6am and 8am Tuesday and Friday: 6pm													
San Francisco de Borja-Rota Sunday: 6am and 8am Monday-Saturday: 6am Wednesday: 6pm													
San Isidro-Rota Sunday: 5am and 10am Monday-Wednesday: 7pm Thursday-Saturday: 5am and 7pm													
San Jose (Oleai) Parish Sunday: 6am and 7:30am Tuesday-Wednesday and Friday-Saturday: 6pm													
San Roque Parish Sunday: 9am Wednesday: 6pm Saturday: 10:30am													
San Vicente Parish Sunday: 6am, 9am and 6pm Monday-Saturday: 6pm													
Santa Remedios Sunday: 7:30am Tuesday: 6pm Saturday: 10am-Baptism													
Santa Soledad Sunday: 7:30am													
PROTESTANT													
Born Again Christian (Upper Room Int'l Ministries), Saipan Wednesday Prayer and Healing Night: 8-10:30pm Saturday Tagalog Service: 8-10:30pm Sunday English Service: 9:30-11am Sunday School for Children: 10-11am Sunday Filipino Service: 7-9pm													
Calvary Baptist Church, Saipan Sunday School: 9am Sunday Morning Worship: 10am Sunday Evening Worship: 6pm Wednesday Prayer Service: 7pm													
Chinese Christian Church of Saipan Worship Services: Sunday, 10am and 7:30pm Bible Study: Tuesday-Friday, 9:25pm													
Cornerstone Christian Church, Saipan Worship/Study Opportunities Adult Sunday School: 9am Youth Sunday School: 9am English Worship Service Sunday: 10am Sunday Service: 5:30pm Worship/Fellowship Sunday: 9:30pm Evangelism/Follow-up: Sunday/Monday: 1:30/7:30pm Worship Team: Monday/Saturday-9pm; Cell Groups Tuesday: 7:30pm Mid-week Service: 7:30pm Prayer Meeting Wednesday: 7:30pm Leader's Bible Study Friday: 7:30 pm Cornerstone School of Ministry Saturday: 7:30pm													
Episcopal/Anglican Church on Saipan St. Paul's Episcopal Church Worship Service Sunday: Holy Communion 9:00am Place: Vicarage, Chalan Laulau, Call 235-0545 for directions													
Grace Christian Assembly, Saipan Worship Service: 9am GBI Classes: 4-6pm Prayer Meeting: Monday-Saturday: 6am Sunday: 7am Home Cell Bible Study: Wednesday-Friday: 7pm Youth Service: Friday: 5:30pm													
Iglesia Ni Cristo, Saipan Wednesday: 7:45pm (Tagalog) Thursday: 5:30am (English); 7:45 pm (English) Saturday: 5:30am (Tagalog); 7:45pm (Tagalog) Sunday: 6:45am (English) Children Worship Service: Sunday, 9am (English)													
Immanuel United Methodist Church Koblerville Sunday Services 8:00 AM Choir Rehearsal 9:00 AM Family Worship 3:00 PM Choir Rehearsal Wednesdays at Parsonage 7:00 PM Prayer, Share and Care													
Immanuel Methodist Church (Filipino Congregation) Sunday: 7:00am-Choir Rehearsal 8:00am-Church Service													
(Tagalog) 9:15am-Sunday School Wednesday: 8:00pm-Prayer Meeting Thursday: 7:30pm-Choir Practice (Church) Saturday: 8:00pm-Choir Practice (Parsonage)													
Jesus is Lord Church, Saipan English Service: 9-11am, Sunday Tagalog Service: 6-8pm, Sunday													
Korean Presbyterian Church, Saipan Sunday School: 8:20am Sunday Adult: 10am Sunday Adult: 11:30am Sunday Evening: 7:30pm Wednesday: 8pm													
Life in the Son Christian Fellowship, Saipan Sunday Worship Service: 10am- 12noon Tuesday: Leadership Institute 7pm-10pm Wednesday: Corporate prayer 7pm-8pm Last Friday of the month-prayer: 7pm-11pm Friday: Youth on Fire: 7pm-9pm Tel. No. 235-LIFE (5433)													
Marianas Baptist Church, Saipan English Worship Service: 9-10:30am Evening Worship Service: 6-7pm Children Sunday School: 9-10:30am Tagalog Sunday School: 11am-12pm English Sunday School: 11am-12pm Korean Worship Service: 11am-12pm Wednesday Prayer Meeting: English, 7pm-8pm Korean: 8:30pm-9:30pm													
Missions Connection Ministry Every Sunday Celebrations: 10am (English), 6pm (Tagalog) Wednesday Bible Study: 7pm Youth Impact Friday: 7pm Saturday Prayer Meeting: 7pm													
Northern Marianas Christian Church Sunday Worship Service 10am Fina Sisu Housing FS#1 (Child care will be provided) Friday Services @ 7pm Fina Sisu FS#1 for more info pls. contact Ryan 484-2620													
Saipan Bible Fellowship Church Sunday School: 9:30-10am Divine Worship: 10am-11:30am Evening Service: 7pm-8:30pm Wednesday Prayer Meeting: 8pm-9pm													
Saipan Christian Church Sunday: 7:30am-10am Sunday: 6:30 pm -9pm Monday: 8 pm -10pm (Prayer Meeting) Thursday: 8pm-10pm (Cell Groups)													
Saipan Church of Christ Sunday Bible Class: 9am Sunday Worship: 10am Sunday Worship English: 6pm Sunday Worship Tagalog: 7pm Wednesday Bible Study: 7:30pm													
Saipan Community Church (Sunday Services) Palau Service: 7:30am-9am English Service: 10am-11:30am Chuukese Service: 1pm-2:30pm Filipino Service: 5:00pm-7:00pm													
Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Saipan (Saturday Church Services) Sabbath School Program: 9-10am Lesson Study: 10-10:40am Divine Service: 11-12pm Visitation: 3-4pm Adventist Youth Program: 4:30-5:30pm Sundown Worship: 6-7pm													
First Baptist Church (Formerly Saipan Baptist Church) Afetna St., San Antonio Sunday <table><tr><td></td><td>9am</td><td>Sunday school</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>10am</td><td>Regular worship</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>6pm</td><td>worship</td></tr></table> Wednesday <table><tr><td>7pm</td><td>worship</td></tr></table> Everyone is warmly welcome to attend our worship services. Transportation is readily available to anyone who needs a ride to our church. For further information, please call Pastor David M. Mclure at 234-1939/235-7779.				9am	Sunday school		10am	Regular worship		6pm	worship	7pm	worship
	9am	Sunday school											
	10am	Regular worship											
	6pm	worship											
7pm	worship												
Thy Word Ministries Saipan Faith Center Phone 234-0209 New Christian Charismatic Church Service located in Chalan Paio, Beach Road in the Sablan building on the 2nd floor above Subway Sandwiches. Senior Pastors: George & Gail Kamakahi Asst. Pastors: Eric & Penny Sakaguchi Service Times Sunday 10:00am Worship Service Sunday 7pm Discipleship Classes Tuesday 10:00am Bible Studies Tuesday 6:00pm Intercessory Prayer Tuesday 7:00pm Music Practice Wednesday 7:00pm Mid-Week Service Saturday 10:00am Evangelism													
Upper Room International Ministries Sunday 5:30 am-6:30 am Morning prayer <table><tr><td>7am-9am</td><td>English service</td></tr><tr><td>7am-9am</td><td>Sunday school</td></tr><tr><td>10am-12noon</td><td>English service,</td></tr></table> Koblerville Wednesday 7pm-9pm Prayer meeting Saturday 7pm-9pm Tagalog service Venue: Jason Presbyterian Church Gualo Rai, Saipan			7am-9am	English service	7am-9am	Sunday school	10am-12noon	English service,					
7am-9am	English service												
7am-9am	Sunday school												
10am-12noon	English service,												
Victory Chapel Christian Fellowship Church Sunday School: 9:30am Sunday AM Worship:10:30am Sunday PM Worship:7:00am Wed Worship: 7:30pm Prayer 45 min. Prior to Service Times Morning Prayer: 6-8am M-S													





Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

MARCH 8, 1999
JAL fare cut 75 percent Japan Airlines has reduced by 50 to 75 percent its airfare on three special occasions in a move to lure more Japanese to travel to Saipan, according to JAL general manager Kaishun Nishigaya. The cut in airfare is part of JAL's promotional campaign to help the Northern Marianas get back its lost market share in Japan as the airline extended the Saipan Special Campaign until fiscal year 1999. Japan's fiscal year begins on April 1, 1999 to June 30, 1999. On May 7-9, all eligible females will only pay 22,000 yen for a round trip Japan-Saipan ticket in celebration of Hahanohi or Mothers Day. On June 18-20, all eligible males will only pay 25,000 yen for a round trip ticket.
Car costs may top \$1.46M The government spends some \$131,564 each month to lease 148 vehicles for use by several departments and agencies, whose total payment will reach at least \$1.46 million by the end of this current fiscal year, according to finance officials. This represents a 34 percent reduction from about \$2.2 million paid for lease of government cars during the previous year, said Finance Sec. Lucy DLG Nielsen in a letter to the House of Representatives. At least 2.6 percent of the overall operations budget of the CNMI government for FY 1999 has gone to paying its car leases, while some departments have set aside a substantial amount from their spending level to meet this obligation.
MARCH 8, 2000
Arriola family charged Joey Arriola, his father, stepmother and two sisters were charged yesterday with obstruction of justice in the Superior Court for attempting to convince a minor to withdraw the sexual abuse case filed against the controversial lawyer. But all the five -- Mr. Arriola, father Antonio, stepmother Marian and sisters Antoinette and Darcy -- pled not guilty to the charges of conspiring with one another in trying to persuade the witness to cast doubts on the prosecution's case. Assistant Attorney General James Benedetto last week filed five counts of sexual abuse against Mr. Arriola for allegedly engaging in sex with a minor identified only as J.C.M.
Anti-smoking campaign targets high school students Three government agencies are now laying the groundwork for a memorandum of understanding that will pave the way for a stepped up anti-smoking campaign which targets public and private high school students. Alcoholic Beverage and Tobacco Control Division Director Andrew Salas said the Department of Public Health is leading the project in partnership with the public safety and the commerce departments. According to Mr. Salas, the MOU is expected to be signed soon to allow anti-smoking advocates conduct promotional campaign on the health risks posed by tobacco use and abuse before the students leave for the summer vacation.
MARCH 8, 2001
6 Filipinos face criminal charges Six Filipinos who stand trial on allegations of counterfeiting US currency before the Superior Court was indicted yesterday by the federal grand jury with one count of uttering counterfeit obligations and securities before the US District Court. The six Filipinos, who all claim to have fallen prey to an illegal recruiter in Manila, each face a 15-year jail term and a \$250,000 fine at the maximum if found guilty. The defendants are expected to appear before US District Court Judge Alex R. Munson for an initial hearing scheduled at 1:30pm today. The charges were filed before the US Court against the six Filipinos more than a month after their arrest at the Saipan International Airport Jan. 24 for allegedly presenting fake \$100 bills to CNMI immigration officers. Previous reports claimed the six defendants were in possession of \$5,000 worth of counterfeit dollar bills when they arrived from Manila.
Increased lobby efforts to repeal 3-year limit urged The Saipan Chamber of Commerce yesterday urged its members to enforce major lobbying strategy at the Legislature to show support for the elimination of the three-year limit stay for nonresident workers. Calling all members to unite and beef up lobbying efforts, Chamber President Anthony Pellegrino stressed the importance of services provided by thousands of guest workers in the CNMI business community. During yesterday's chamber meeting, Mr. Pellegrino noted the quality of work needed from nonresident workers who occupy thousands of positions in various private and public agencies.

Business

Oil steadies above \$105 after record

SINGAPORE (AP)—Oil prices were steady Friday after jumping to a trading record near \$106 a barrel in the previous session as the dollar's slide to new lows prompted investors to pump more money into commodities. Analysts believe the steadily weakening dollar is the reason oil prices have jumped to a number of new inflation-adjusted record highs this week. Crude futures offer a hedge against a falling dollar, and oil futures bought and sold in dollars are more attractive to foreign investors when the dollar is falling. “There are expectations that the dollar will go lower, and that's driving money into commodities,” said Victor Shum, an energy analyst with Purvin & Gertz in Singapore. “Traders now have this mantra: sell the dollar and buy oil, or buy commodities.” Light, sweet crude for April delivery fell 9 cents to \$105.38 a barrel in Asian electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange by midday in Singapore. The contract rose 95 cents Thursday to settle at a record \$105.47 a barrel after earlier spiking to a trading record of \$105.97. Analyst estimates for where oil goes from here vary widely. Some predict an eventual decline to the \$65 or \$70 range as supplies continue to grow and demand falls. Others see prices rising as high as \$120 as investment capital continues to flow into oil. “We have the speculative funds and investors betting that oil pricing will strengthen. On the other	 <p>AP</p> <p>A car goes past a pair of gas stations posting competing prices for cash and credit purchases Thursday, March 6, 2008, in Seattle.</p> <p>hand, we have the commercial players, who actually ship and use the oil, betting that prices will decline,” Shum said. “Lately, the noncommercial players are winning and driving oil higher because their money is searching for better returns and oil has performed much better than equities and bonds since the middle of last year,” he said. Shum said market fundamentals, which have shown increases in crude inventories amid softening demand, do not justify the current price surge, and warned of a sharp correction. “The strength in oil pricing smells of a bubble ... the oil market might be primed for a pullback,” he said. “At some point, some event will trigger financial players to exit oil as fast as they've got into oil.”</p> <tr><td> BUSINESS BRIEFS</td><td>Stocks drop amid credit concerns NEW YORK (AP)—Stocks tumbled Thursday as the ailing credit market and a spike in home foreclosures intensified the market's worries about a sagging economy. The Dow Jones industrials gave up 214 points. The Dow fell 214.60, or 1.75 percent, to 12,040.39 - almost slipping below the 12,000 level, which it briefly did in January for the first time since November 2006. Broader indexes also retreated.</td></tr> <tr><td>Senate OKs tougher overseas toy checks WASHINGTON (AP)—Responding to record recalls of products that sickened children, the Senate passed legislation Thursday that would toughen inspections of toys and other playthings made outside the U.S. The bill calls for a public database of consumer complaints, bolsters the Consumer Products Safety Commission to help it certify the safety of overseas products, bans lead in children's goods and sets new standards for safe toys. It won approval by a 79-13 vote after four days of debate.</td><td>Firms accused of toxic toothpaste import LOS ANGELES (AP)—Criminal charges have been filed against a company that prosecutors say imported and distributed nearly 90,000 tubes of Chinese toothpaste containing a poisonous substance and a wholesaler that supplied local stores with the tubes, City Attorney Rocky Delgadillo announced Thursday. 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Nation

NYC struck again by mystery bomber

NEW YORK (AP)—For the third time in as many years, someone riding a bike and armed with a small explosive has struck in Manhattan, this time in the highest-profile location by far: a landmark military recruitment station in the heart of Times Square.

The bomb, contained in a metal ammunition box, produced a sudden flash and billowing cloud of white smoke at about 3:40 a.m. Thursday - a scene captured by numerous security video cameras. When the smoke cleared, there were no injuries, serious damage or clear indication of motive.

But like similar attacks on the British and Mexican consulates, the explosion frayed nerves of New Yorkers and tourists alike. Although authorities have not definitively linked the three attacks, the latest episode heightened speculation that they were the work of a lone bomber who, perhaps emboldened by his past success, sought out the bright lights of Times Square.

"Times Square is 'the crossroads of the world' and we're concerned about it," Police Commissioner Raymond Kel-



Police officers with the Washington Metropolitan Police Department sit in their cruiser outside an Armed Forces Recruiting Center, Thursday, March 6, 2008, in Washington as another officer, left, exits the center.

ly said at a news conference where the NYPD released a video of the shadowy figure on a bicycle.

A law enforcement official said police are investigating letters sent to Capitol Hill offices showing pictures of the recruiting station. According to the official, who was briefed on the investiga-

tion, the letters included words to the effect of, "We did it." The official did not know which offices received the letters.

The Associated Press obtained a copy of an e-mail from the office of Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., to other lawmakers Thursday that reads:

"A few offices on the House

side have received a letter today addressed to 'Members of Congress' with a picture of a man standing in front of the Times Square recruiting station that was bombed in New York today with the statement 'We did it.' He is standing in front of it with his arms spread out and he's attached his political manifesto."

Los Angeles gang violence spikes, kills one student

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Jamiel Shaw's "18-year plan" for his son was beautifully simple: stay in school, make the grades, stay out of trouble and go off to a college far away from their gang-infested neighborhood.

The plan was working to perfection. Two months past his 17th birthday, Jamiel Shaw Jr. had stayed out of gangs, was

a solid student and standout athlete. An ultra-quick running back who led his high school's football team to a Southern League title, he was attracting scholarship attention from Stanford, Rutgers and other schools.

Two gunshots ended the plan, and Jamiel Jr.'s life.

"I thought everything that I was doing was going to keep

him from this," his father said, choking back tears.

The boy was shot Sunday night on a sidewalk just a few doors from home, close enough for Jamiel Sr. to hear the gunfire. He ran outside and found his mortally wounded son in a pool of blood.

Several Los Angeles neighborhoods are experiencing a spate of gang violence. In the

last two weeks, police engaged in a gunbattle with a carload of alleged gang members after a man was shot as he walked with a child; eight people—five of them children—were wounded when a man fired into a crowd near a bus stop; and a 6-year-old boy was shot in the head and critically wounded while riding in a car with his family.

Clinton stumps in Obama-friendly Miss.

CANTON, Miss. (AP) -- Fresh off a trio of primary victories, Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton sought to set low expectations for Tuesday's primary in Mississippi by telling Democrats that even if they support her opponent the moment is historic.

Her appearance at a state Democratic dinner here, and at a scheduled town hall Friday morning in Hattiesburg, could be her only stops in the state where her campaign has said Sen. Barack Obama, her rival for the party's presidential nomination, will likely do well.

"I'm well aware that Senator Obama has an enormous amount of support here, as he should, as he should have," Clinton said. "Some people have said 'Well Mississippi is very much a state that will most likely be in favor of Senator Obama.' I said 'Well, that's fine,' but I want people in Mississippi to know I'm for you."

WASHINGTON (AP)—GOP presidential candidate Ron Paul is hinting to supporters that he is ending his long-shot campaign for the presidency.

The Texas Republican congressman addressed supporters in a 7 1/2-minute video on his campaign Web site Thursday night and did not specifically say he was quitting the race.

He said that although victory in the conventional political sense is not available in the presidential race, many victories have been achieved due to the hard work and enthusiasm of his supporters.

He said that he hoped that one day he and his supporters could look back and say his campaign was a significant first step that signaled a change in direction for the country.

Paul said their job now was to plan for the next phase of their effort.

With the contest down to a state-by-state hunt for convention delegates after her wins this week in primaries in Texas, Ohio and Rhode Island, Clinton hopes to pick up as many of Mississippi's 33 delegates as she can.

Obama is expected to do better, partly because of the gains he has made with black voters. Mississippi's population is 37 percent black.

Clinton, who had long counted blacks as part of her base, has seen that support slip throughout the primary season. It took a turn particularly when her husband, Bill Clinton, angered some black voters after Obama won South Carolina's primary in January.

North Carolina student president killed

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. (AP)—The University of North Carolina student body president was found shot to death on a city street in what police said Thursday appeared to be a random crime, stunning the campus community who knew her well.

Thousands of students gathered silently on campus to mourn Eve Marie Carson, whose body was discovered about a mile away early Wednesday. The 22-year-old senior from Athens, Ga., had been shot several times, including at least once in the head, police said. Officials said there are no suspects and no arrests have been made.

"We have lost someone whom we cherish and love," university Chancellor James Moeser told a massive crowd on the school's Polk Place quad. "We're all in a state of shock."

A witness reported finding Carson's vehicle, a blue 2005 Toyota Highlander with Georgia plates, near the main drag through the college town about 45 minutes west of Raleigh.

Toby Rice, of Chapel Hill, told The Associated Press his wife dis-



This undated photo of Eve Carson, student body president at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, was released by the university Thursday, March 6, 2008.

covered the car and called 911.

"We saw it on the news and we heard the woman is the president of the student body, and she goes, 'Oh my God, I just found the car,'" Rice said.

Lt. Kevin Gunter, spokesman for the Chapel Hill Police Department, declined to confirm whether police had found the car.

Notice of Public Hearing LaoLao Golfel Hotel and Housing

The public is invited to provide comments at a Zoning Board public hearing on a Conditional Use Permit Application, No. 2008-0302, by the Saipan LauLau Development, Inc. The application is for construction of tower and villa buildings and staff housing at the LaoLao Bay Golf Resort, Saipan.

Date: March 26, 2008
Time: 6:30 pm
Place: ChaCha Ocean View Middle School Cafeteria

The conditional use application may be viewed at the Zoning Office, 2nd Floor, Joeten Building, DanDan, Saipan. After the public hearing, the Zoning Board will make a decision on whether to issue or deny the permit.

Comments on the project may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may also be submitted to the Zoning Office but they must be received at the Zoning Office by 4:30 pm, March 26, 2008. Written comments may be submitted via e-mail to staff@zoning.gov.mp, via US mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or delivered to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, DanDan, Saipan.

For questions or access to materials to be considered at the public hearing, or if you require assistance, please contact the Zoning Office at 234-9663. This notice is provided pursuant to Public Law 6-32, as amended (2 CMC 7201, et seq. & Division 3 of Title 10 CMC).

/s/ Henry S. Hofschneider, Chair.

Notice of Public Hearing U.C. Corp Beach Concession

The public is invited to provide comments at a Zoning Board public hearing on a Conditional Use Permit Application, No. 2008-0310, by U.C. Corp. The application is for construction of a beach concession stand for rental of non-motorized watercraft on the beach near Lot 006 H 35, Chalan Kanoa, Saipan.

Date: March 26, 2008
Time: 6:30 pm
Place: ChaCha Ocean View Middle School Cafeteria

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/s/ Henry S. Hofschneider, Chair.

Asia

Thais detain alleged 'Merchant of Death'

BANGKOK, Thailand (AP)—A Russian dubbed the "Merchant of Death" for allegedly supplying weapons to Africa's bloody conflicts over power and diamonds was arrested Thursday in Thailand on suspicion of conspiring to smuggle guns to Colombia's leftist rebels.

Viktor Bout, 41, whose dealings reportedly inspired a 2005 movie about the illicit arms trade, was arrested at U.S. request in his hotel room in Bangkok, said police Lt. Gen. Pongpat Chayapan. Bout had eluded arrest for years and was finally seized after a four-month sting organized by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration.

In New York, federal authorities unsealed a criminal complaint charging that Bout conspired to sell millions of dollars worth of weapons, including 100 surface-to-air missiles and armor-piercing



Suspected Russian arms dealer Viktor Bout, dubbed "The Merchant of Death" is escorted to a hearing at police headquarters by Thai authorities Friday, March, 7, 2008, in Bangkok, Thailand.

rockets, that he thought were going to the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia.

The leftist group, which has been fighting Colombia's government for more than four

decades, is listed by the U.S. as a terror group. Bout and an associate, Andrew Smulian, were charged with "conspiring to provide material support to a foreign terrorist organization."

Indian Kashmir to poison 100,000 strays

SRINAGAR, India (AP)—Officials in Indian-Kashmir have poisoned hundreds of dogs and aim to kill all 100,000 strays in the region's main city—saying the animals pose a risk to humans and make urban life unbearable.

With the world's highest rabies fatality rate, India has long struggled to control its millions of stray dogs, a prob-

lem exacerbated by rapidly growing cities and slums.

Animal rights activists vowed Thursday to go to court to stop the slaughter planned by Srinagar city, saying it is an illegal and cruel solution to a problem that could be addressed in other ways.

City officials, however, said they would press ahead.

"These dogs have become a big nuisance and they are threatening humans," said Dr. Riyaz Ahmad, the Srinagar city health officer who is organizing the killings.

"We have placed orders for the poison and then we will launch a large-scale drive. For the time being we are doing it with stocks we have," he told The Associated Press.

choice but to risk the dangerous journey to China," Amnesty said in a statement, calling the executions "yet another injustice for the beleaguered population." Earlier this week, the South Korean aid group Good Friends said the North executed two men and 13 women on Feb. 20 as a warning against illegal border crossings to China.

Myanmar monk tells story of killings

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)—A Myanmar monk called for a global weapons embargo on his country, telling human rights activists and foreign governments Thursday the junta's military leaders must not be allowed to use guns against his people again. U Awbata said he struggles to shake memories of Myanmar soldiers opening fire on fellow monks, stomping on their heads and pummeling them with batons during protests last September. "It doesn't matter how many tears I shed," U Awbata said, speaking on behalf of dozens of monks who fled after the military crackdown and live in exile. "I cannot erase these images from my mind." Monks initially took to the streets of Myanmar's largest city, Yangon, to oppose a state-imposed fuel price hike, but their protests quickly escalated into the biggest anti-government rallies in two decades, with tens of thousands turning out.

ASIAN BRIEFS

10 Korean 'sex slaves' freed in Sydney

SYDNEY, Australia (AP)—Police have rescued 10 South Korean women who were forced to work in a Sydney brothel by a sex slavery syndicate that lured them to Australia with promises of legitimate jobs, officials said Friday. Four Australian men and women and a South Korean woman were arrested early Friday and charged with multiple offenses relating to a sex trafficking business that was making \$2.8 million a year, Australian Federal Police and the Immigration Department said in a joint statement. The victims, who were rescued by police Thursday, were receiving counseling and government support, immigration official Lyn O'Connell said. She said no decision had been made on whether they would remain in Australia as prosecution witnesses.

NKorea's alleged execution condemned

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—The human rights group Amnesty International condemned Friday North Korea's alleged public execution last month of 15 people accused of attempting to flee or of helping others escape the impoverished nation. The London-based group urged Pyongyang to halt such summary executions. "Due to chronic food shortages, many North Koreans have little

World

Gunman kills 8 at Jerusalem seminary

JERUSALEM (AP)—A gunman entered the library of a rabbinical seminary and opened fire on a crowded nighttime study session Thursday, killing eight people and wounding nine before he was slain, police and rescue workers said. It was the first major militant attack in Jerusalem in more than four years.

Hamas militants in the Gaza Strip praised the operation in a statement, and thousands of Palestinians took to the streets of Gaza to celebrate.

The day's violence, which also included a deadly ambush of an army patrol near Israel's border with Gaza, was likely to complicate attempts by Egypt to arrange a truce between Israel and Palestinian militants. The U.S. is backing the Egyptian effort.

Israeli government spokesman Mark Regev and moderate Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas condemned the shooting. But Regev said the Palestinian government must take steps against the extremists - not just denounce their attacks.

"Tonight's massacre in Jerusalem is a defining moment," he told The Associated Press. "It is clear that those people celebrating this bloodshed have shown themselves to be not only the enemies of Israel but of all of humanity."

Secretary of State Condoleezza



In this photo released by Zaka Rescue and Recovery, rescue workers work next to an automatic rifle that was used by a Palestinian gunman at the site of a shooting attack in Jerusalem, Thursday, March 6, 2008.

za Rice, who only on Wednesday persuaded Abbas to return to peace talks with Israel, called the attack an "act of terror and depravity."

Israeli defense officials said the attacker came from east

Jerusalem, the predominantly Palestinian section of the city. Jerusalem's Palestinians have Israeli ID cards that give them freedom of movement in Israel, unlike Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza.

Bombs kill more than 50 in Baghdad

BAGHDAD (AP)—Two bombs went off within minutes of each other in a crowded shopping district in the capital Thursday, killing at least 53 people and wounding 130—a reminder that deadly attacks are a daily threat even though violence is down.

There were no immediate claims of responsibility. But back-to-back bombings—designed to maximize carnage—became the hallmark of attacks on civilians by al-Qaida in Iraq during the worst of the violence in Baghdad in 2006.

Like in previous such attacks, the tactic seeks to draw in the people with the first blast—especially security and medi-

cal workers—before a second bomb detonates.

Iraqis were enjoying a pleasant spring evening when a roadside bomb hidden under a vendor stall detonated in the primarily Shiite, middle-class Baghdad neighborhood of Karradah. Five minutes later, a suicide bomber wearing an explosive belt detonated, Mohammed al-Rubaie, the head of the Karradah municipality, told the state-run Al-Iraqiya TV.

He said more than 50 civilians were killed and more than 100 injured. Many of the victims were teens or young adults, and four were women, police and officials at three hospitals said.

Interior Ministry officials

and hospital officials said 53 people were killed and 130 were wounded. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because not authorized to speak to media.

Hassan Abdullah, who owns a clothing shop in the area, said he was walking to the site of the first blast to see what happened when the second bomb went off.

"I saw a leg and a hand falling near me as I was walking. The whole place was a mess. Wounded people were crying for help, and people started to run away," said Abdullah, 25. "The aim of such attacks is the random killing of as many people as possible in order to terrorize Iraqi people."

Tons of food aid rotting in Haiti ports

CAP-HAITIEN, Haiti (AP)—While millions of Haitians go hungry, containers full of food are stacking up in the nation's ports because of government red tape - leaving tons of beans, rice and other staples to rot under a sweltering sun or be devoured by vermin.

A government attempt to clean up a corrupt port system that has helped make Haiti a major conduit for Colombian cocaine has added new layers of bureaucracy—and led to backlogs so severe they are being felt 600 miles away in

Miami, where cargo shipments to Haiti have ground almost to a standstill.

The problems are depriving desperate people of donated food. Some are so poor they are forced to eat cookies made of dirt, salt and vegetable oil to satisfy their hunger.

An Associated Press investigation found the situation is most severe in Cap-Haitien, Haiti's second-largest city. One recent afternoon, garbage men shoveled a pile of rotting pinto beans that had turned gray and crumbled to dust as cockroaches

and beetles scurried about.

The men had found the putrid cargo by following a stench through stacked shipping containers to one holding 40,000 pounds of beans. It had been in port since November.

"So many times, by the time (the food) gets out of customs it's expired and we're forced to burn it," said Susie Scott Krabacher, whose Colorado-based Mercy and Sharing Foundation has worked in Haiti for 14 years. "The food is there. It is available. It just can't get to the people."

Maharlika – PinoyNews

US says RP leading regional prosperity—envoy

By CYNTHIA BALANA
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA—The Philippines, along with Indonesia, is “poised to lead East Asian and the Pacific region toward economic prosperity and democracy,” Philippine ambassador to the United States Willy C. Gaa quoted the US State Department as saying.

In a statement posted on the Philippine embassy’s website, Gaa thanked the State Department for expressing its continued confidence in the Philippine economy and democracy in its recently released US State Department 2009 Congressional Budget Justification Report.

He said that over half of the budget request of the State Department for Fiscal Year 2009 for the East Asia and Pacific region was intended for these two countries.

In addition, the report states that

“the East Asian and Pacific region includes some of the most impressive democratic transformations of our time in places as diverse as South Korea, the Philippines, Indonesia, Mongolia and Taiwan.”

With respect to the Philippines, Gaa said the report stated that the country has achieved significant peace, development and security enforcement gains.

The report noted that there was need to further support the efforts of the Philippines to bring growth and development to areas marred by terrorist activities. With this in mind, the report continued, the US government intends to partner with the Philippines as a key country for assistance programs under the economic growth category to help address underlying conditions such as poverty and underdevelopment.

In terms of US security objec-

tives, the Philippines, along with Indonesia and Mongolia, are cited in the report as key allies of the US in the war on terror in the East Asia and Pacific region.

Gaa said that these three countries will be getting major portions of the request for assistance programs under the Peace and Security category.

“This report clearly shows that the US government recognizes the Philippines as a leading partner in the war on terror in the region and gleaming example of a vibrant economy under a democratic system,” Gaa said.

“The Philippine Government appreciates the support of the US government in our efforts to address those challenges that remain to be hurdled in our Government’s pursuit of establishing a strong and prosperous democracy for the Filipino people,” he added.



JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

KITEFLIERS

Canape brothers Jacob, John and Ezek launch their eagle kite during the 3rd Annual Marianas Wind Kite Festival and Cultural Food Fair at the American Memorial Park Center Ball Field Saturday last week.

Senate summons Chinese firm’s execs linked to scandal

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The Philippine Senate has summoned two executives of Chinese telecommunications giant ZTE Corp. to testify about a corruption scandal battering President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo’s administration, officials said Thursday.

The opposition-dominated Senate is investigating the government’s broadband deal with ZTE, endorsed by Arroyo, that

was allegedly tainted by bribery.

Arroyo, her husband and the country’s elections chief—who has since quit—have denied allegations by former consultants in the deal that they benefited from huge kickbacks in the aborted deal to set up a nationwide broadband Internet network.

Senate President Manny Villar told reporters that ZTE executives Yu Yong and Fan Yang

and five Filipinos, including the former elections chief, were served with subpoenas.

Dante Madriaga, who claimed to be a former ZTE consultant and head of the broadband project’s design team, referred to the five Filipinos as the “greedy bunch” who allegedly collected up to US\$41 million (€27 million) in bribes from ZTE for the US\$330 million (€222.25 million) deal.

Filipino skipper found dead in Japan

By VERONICA UY
INQUIRER.NET

TOKYO/MANILA—The Filipino skipper of a sunken cargo ship was found dead on Thursday, bringing the death toll to two from a collision in western

Japan, the coast guard said.

The body of the ship’s captain, identified as Tomasniri D. Demandaco Jr., was recovered after it was pulled in by a fishing boat in its trawl net, the coast guard said.

Three vessels—Gold Lead-

er, Daigo Eisei Maru, and Ocean Phoenix—collided Wednesday in the Akashi Strait, part of Japan’s Inland Sea. The 1,466-tonne Belize-registered M/V Gold Leader, a cargo ship with nine Filipino crew on board, sank.

RP’s heroes of philanthropy, according to Forbes

MANILA (PDI)—Forbes magazine has named four top Filipino business executives—Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala II, John Gokongwei Jr., Oscar M. Lopez and Ramon del Rosario Jr.—as among the “Heroes of Philanthropy” in Asia.

It was the first time that Forbes had issued such a list, which included 48 philanthropists from 12 Asian countries, four from each country.

This was how Forbes described the four Filipino businessmen:

RAMON DEL ROSARIO JR., 63

■ President and chief executive of investment firm Phinma, co-founded by his father in 1956 as Philippine Investment Management.

■ Long-time patron of De La Salle schools, which have elementary schools, high schools and universities around the country.

■ Recently launched a campaign for Philippine Business for Social Progress to raise \$25 million for the Pinoy Micro-Enterprise Social Investment Fund, which will help microfinance institutions extend loans to poorer customers.



Del Rosario

RELATED NEWS

Lucio Tan, Henry Sy make it again to world’s richest list. **PAGE 13**

JAIME AUGUST ZOBEL DE AYALA II, 49

■ Chair and chief executive of conglomerate Ayala Corp.

■ Serves as co-vice chair of the Ayala Foundation, which focuses on improving elementary education, developing young leaders, boosting environmental protection, increasing access to technology, and supporting arts and culture. It’s now coordinating a project to set up computer labs in all 6,300 of the country’s public schools.

■ He argues that businesses must work aggressively to solve the country’s immense problems of poverty.

JOHN GOKONGWEI JR., 81

■ Founder and chair emeritus of conglomerate JG Summit Holdings.

■ Announced at his 80th birthday celebration in August 2006 that he was giving half of his shares of the company—worth \$200



Zobel De Ayala

million then—to the Gokongwei Brothers Foundation, which he chairs.

■ That donation is the country’s largest ever and is now funding the first batch of 34 Filipino postgraduates—Gokongwei Brothers Foundation China Scholars—who are in Beijing for 14 months to study the country’s language and culture.

OSCAR M. LOPEZ, 77

■ Chair of the Lopez Inc. media group, which controls ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.

■ Family has been wealthy since the 19th century. Donated 37 acres of family land to 116 Guimaras Island families still suffering from the 2006 oil spill. Lopez Group Foundation is helping to set up a co-operative farming venture there.

■ In 1999 he started First Philippine Conservation, which works to protect country’s largest remaining block of old-growth rainforest in Sierra Madre range.



Gokongwei



Lopez

LABOR FRONT

Transfer to a new employer

By FERDIE P. DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Q: Who has the authority to allow an alien worker transfer to a new employer?

A: Only a Labor hearing officer may grant an alien worker’s request to transfer to a new employer. According to the new Alien Labor Rules and Regulations, a Labor hearing officer may grant a transfer if other remedies are insufficient to provide a foreign national worker the benefit of the bargain made when entering the approved employment contract.

If a hearing officer grants a transfer, a foreign national worker may become employed under a new approved employment contract without first exiting the Commonwealth.

Q: What are the grounds for the Labor hearing officer to consider in granting transfer relief to an alien worker?

A: According to the new Alien Labor and Regulations, the grounds include the unlawful termination of an approved employment contract, the voiding of an approved employment contract or debarment of an employer for a violation of Public Law 15-108 (new Labor reform law), and a reduction in force.

Other grounds include the abandonment of the worker during the term of an approved employment contract, but prior to 90 days before the termination date of the contract, by an employer who failed to pay bi-weekly wages on two successive occasions, closed a business, de-

clared bankruptcy, or exited the Commonwealth evidencing an intent not to return.

Another good reason to grant transfer relief is upon a finding by the Labor hearing officer that the foreign national worker has prevailed under an equivalent theory of law or equity and that transfer relief is appropriate.

Q: An alien worker and his or her employer try to settle their Labor dispute. Can they include transfer relief in their settlement?

A: Yes, if it is appropriate. But the new Labor Rules and Regulations emphasize that such transfer request pursuant to a settlement will be subject to approval by a Labor hearing officer.

A regulations state that “transfer may be granted only to an alien worker who has complied with the provisions of the approved employment contract to the extent practicable under the circumstances, and for whom transfer relief is required in order to assure receipt of the benefit of the bargain under the contract that is the subject of the action.”

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3 allegedly plotting to bomb embassies

By **JIM GOMEZ**
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Philippine authorities have arrested three suspected Middle Eastern militants suspected of involvement in a plot to bomb the U.S. and three other foreign embassies in Manila, officials said Thursday.

"There is a high probability that they are involved in some kind of plan

to sow trouble," Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita told reporters on the sidelines of an annual anti-terrorism and business security conference. All are Middle Eastern nationals.

One of the militants was arrested in Manila and the two others were separately captured in the southern Philippines recently.

Ermita refused to provide details, but two senior Filipino security officials told The Associated Press that inves-

tigators were verifying intelligence information that the three may have been involved in an active plot to bomb the U.S., British, Australian and Israeli embassies in Manila.

The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to talk to the media.

Efforts to obtain comment from the four embassies were not immediately successful. Australian officials saying they could not comment on security issues.

Authorities believe the three may have links with the Indonesia-based militant group Jemaah Islamiyah and the Abu Sayyaf, a small but violent southern Philippine-based group blacklisted by Washington as a terror organization.

Both groups have been blamed for deadly bomb attacks, including the February 2004 bombing of a ferry in Manila Bay that killed 116 people in the country's worst terrorist attack.

Funding for the plot has been se-

cured, indicating that the planned attack against any of the embassies may already be in an advanced stage, one of the security officials said, adding that all the embassies concerned have been notified.

At least one of the three suspected militants identified himself as Jordanian, but investigators were trying to verify their identities. One was arrested at a Manila airport Feb. 15 and follow-up operations were under way, he said.



Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo looks around after passing the honor guard Thursday, March 6, 2008 at the Villamor Air Base in suburban Pasay City, south of Manila, Philippines to witness the loading of relief goods for distribution to different flood stricken areas in the country.

Arroyo hit on Spratlys deal

By **JULIET LABOG-JAVELLANA,**
ABIGAIL L. HO
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA—Former Senate President Franklin Drilon disclosed Thursday that Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez, then President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's chief legal counsel, had said the deal might be in violation of the Constitution and could be grounds for her impeachment.

"I'm willing to state this under oath wherever they will call me," Drilon told the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

Drilon said Gutierrez sought his help regarding the planned agreement between the Philippines and China shortly before it was signed in September 2004.

"[She] approached me and asked

for my help because, in her view, the agreement allowing China to explore our resources violated the Constitution," Drilon said.

Last week, a highly placed source privy to the deal told the Inquirer that the Philippines gave up its natural resources when it signed the agreement allowing China to gather seismic data off Palawan province in an area mostly within Philippine territorial waters. The source, who asked not to be named for security reasons, said the agreement might have been forged to provide a "political solution" to the long-standing struggle among six nations for ownership of the Spratly group of islands, which is said to be rich in gas and oil deposits, and which the Philippines is claiming in part.

But Barry Wain, in an article in the January-February 2008 issue of the Far Eastern Economic Review, quoted Mark Valencia, an independent expert on the South China Sea, as saying: "Some would say it was a sellout on the part of the Philippines."

The Inquirer repeatedly tried to reach Gutierrez by phone, to no avail.

According to Ana Sanchez of the Office of the Ombudsman, Gutierrez was in the United States for an official briefing with USAID and was due back on Monday.

The Senate and the House of Representatives are poised to conduct separate investigations into the Spratlys deal, which was purportedly forged in exchange for the controversial China-funded loans for the scuttled National Broadband Network (NBN) deal and the Cyber Education, NorthRail and SouthRail projects.

Lucio Tan, Henry Sy make it again to world's richest list

NEW YORK (PDI)—Tobacco king Lucio Tan and mall magnate Henry Sy remained among the world's super-rich, according to Forbes magazine's annual billionaires list.

The number of billionaires in Asia jumped more than 30 percent, with tycoons from India and China leading the charge, but US financier Warren Buffett has dislodged Bill Gates as the world's richest man, according to Forbes.

In total, this year saw 1,125 people around the world making the list, up from 946 last year, representing a total net worth of \$4.4 trillion, a dramatic increase from the \$3.5 trillion in 2007.

The list had two billionaires from the Philippines—Tan and Sy, and their respective families.

Tan was 785th on the list with a net worth of \$1.5 billion. Sy was 843rd with a net worth of \$1.4 billion.

Tan and Sy were also on the Forbes billionaires list in 2006 and 2007.

Forbes ranked Tan No. 451 in 2006, placing his fortune at \$1.7 billion. It listed him at No. 407 in 2007, with \$2.3 billion.

Sy and family were No. 512 in the 2006 list, with \$1.5 billion. The 2007 list had Sy and real estate tycoon Jaime Zobel de Ayala at No. 349 with a net worth of \$2.6 billion each.

Ayala and family were also on the



Tan



Sy

US has most number

In the latest list, the richest woman in the world was France's Liliane Bettencourt, of cosmetics company L'Oreal, with a personal fortune of \$22.9 billion, partly helped by the weak US dollar, the magazine said.

Former Harvard student Mark Zuckerberg, the 23-year-old founder of social networking site Facebook, is the youngest ever self-made billionaire. Forbes put

his personal wealth at \$1.5 billion.

By country, the United States had the most billionaires with 469, up from 415 last year.

Amazing year

Steve Forbes, the magazine's editor in chief, said the past year "was an amazing one around the world in terms of the global economy and it's reflected on this list."

He said the number of billionaires had almost doubled in the past four years.

"The reason for this explosion in wealth is that we're in the midst of a phenomenal global gloom," he added.

De Venecia fate up as Lakas execs meet

By **MAILA AGER**
INQUIRER.NET

MANILA—Former president Fidel Ramos, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, former Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. and other senior leaders of the ruling Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats are meeting this Friday at an undisclosed hotel in Metro Manila.

The officials, who are all members of the Lakas executive committee, are ex-

pected to tackle the fate of its party president, De Venecia, ahead of the March 10 national directorate meeting of Lakas.

Aside from Ramos, Ermita, and De Venecia, other Lakas officials who showed up in the meeting were former senator Heherson Alvarez, Gabriele Claudio, and Parañaque Representative Eduardo Zialcita.

Ramos was first to arrive at the hotel followed by Ermita but both refused to disclose the agenda of the meeting.

'To fuel growth and cut poverty, RP must hike revenue, curb corruption'

By **TERESA CEROJANO**
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—The Philippines has fallen behind its neighbors in economic development and must raise revenues, stifle corruption, improve infrastructure and create jobs to fuel growth and reduce poverty, the Asian Development Bank said Thursday.

A report by the Manila-based bank said the country's pace of poverty reduction has been slow and its income inequality remains the highest in Southeast Asia. Government data, released Wednesday, showed that 26.9 percent of Filipino families were below the official poverty threshold in 2006, up from 24.4 percent in 2003.

The economy has expanded in recent years, posting 7.3 percent growth in

2007, the highest in three decades. But the bank warned that public and private investment remain sluggish and their share in gross domestic product has continued to decline, raising questions on whether the economic momentum can be sustained.

During 2002-2006, foreign direct investment amounted to about US\$1.1 billion (€720 million), compared with US\$6.1 billion (€4.0 billion) for Thai-

land and US\$3.9 billion (€2.6 billion) for Malaysia.

The lower FDI partly explains a smaller and narrower industrial base compared to its neighbors. In 2005, the share of manufacturing in gross domestic product was about 23.5 percent, compared with 34.8 percent in Thailand and 30.6 percent in Malaysia.

Ifzal Ali, ADB's chief economist, said removing the most critical con-

straints will spur investment and spark sustained and high growth.

"This would ensure that the fruits of development are shared by all," he said.

The report said the country's fiscal situation remains tight, poor infrastructure has raised the cost of doing business, and worsening corruption and political instability have eroded investor confidence.

Maharlika – PinoyStyle

Supporting actress insecure about lead star

By DOLLY ANNE CARVAJAL
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—Guess who these costars in a teleserye are. The lead actress was taunting a production staff member, “Inggit ka sa akin, ‘no?’” within earshot of the supporting actress. LA’s comment seemed really meant for SA but she just downplayed it by directing it to someone else.

Insiders attest that SA is super insecure with LA and her efforts to befriend LA are all for show. Looks like the plot continues to thicken off-cam.

Gawad Tanglaw awardees

I am still in a euphoric state after bagging the Gawad Tanglaw award for Best Entertainment Columnist. What an honor to be chosen by professors, deans, scholars and distinguished members of the academe! It’s so humbling to know that they put up GT out of their pure passion for the arts.

They don’t solicit from sponsors but shell out their own money for the annual ceremonies. Kudos to Jaime Ang, Romeo Flaviano Lirio and company for their tireless efforts in paying tribute to artists.

I dedicated my award to the



Cherrie Pie Picache

woman who taught me how to write my first word and who taught me how to see true and write true—my mom, the late great Inday Badiday.

Here are the major awardees of the 6th Gawad Tanglaw para sa Sining at Kultura:

Best Films: “Foster Child” (Seiko Films), “Tribu” (8 Glasses Production Inc.) and “Sakal, Sakali, Saklolo” (Star Cinema)

Lifetime Achievement Award:

Carlo J. Caparas

Best Actor: Sid Lucero (“Selda”)

Best Supporting Actors: Michael De Mesa (“Selda”) and Emilio Garcia (“Selda”)

Best Actress: Cherry Pie Picache (“Foster Child”)

Best Supporting Actress: Eugene Domingo (“Foster Child” and “Pisay”)

Best Directors: Dante Mendoza (“Foster Child”), Jim Libiran (“Tribu”), Jose Javier Reyes (“Sakal, Sakali, Saklolo”)

Best Public Service Program: “Wish Ko Lang”

Outstanding Movie Producer: Robbie Tan

Bowl of cherries

I asked actress non-pareil Cherrie Pie Picache what the hardest scene in “Foster Child” was. “Almost all the scenes kasi I was told not to act,” she said. “So 17 years of what I learned in acting were thrown away.” But with Picache’s brilliance, any role is a bowl of cherries.

First time

When one of Eugene Domingo’s GT medals broke, everyone broke into laughter when she said, “First time may manalo ng Best Supporting Actress for two movies. Ako yun. At first time din may mabasag na medal. Sana palitan ng Gawad Tanglaw ang medal pero bawal palitan ang winner, ha? Ahhh! The sweet comic taste of victory!”

Twin boys

Vicky Morales is due to give

birth to her twin boys in two weeks time but she really made an effort to attend the GT rites.

“This award is meaningful because it comes from teachers. Malaki ang respeto ko sa mga guro kasi sila ang pangalawang magulang natin and they shape our minds,” she noted. Hubby



Gretchen Barretto

King Reyno was proudly taking pics of his Queen.

Like father

Sid Lucero dedicated his award to his mom Bing Pimentel who was in the audience with his GF. “There’s nothing more honorable than getting an award from respectable people,” he said in

his acceptance speech. Sid undoubtedly took after his dad’s (Mark Gil) acting prowess. He’s the (Eigenn)MAN.

Celebs’ updates

Here are the celebs’ Facebook.com updates:

■ Pops Fernandez is thinking of changing her hairstyle.

■ Iza Calzado is missing the great Jerry Garcia.

■ Luis Manzano hasn’t slept and is still working.

■ Geneva Cruz is in Cebu chilling with her cousin Donna.

■ Miriam Quiambao is excited to leave for Greece.

■ Karylle is in Las Vegas for her lolo and Manga’s 50th anniversary.

Playing Cupid

The Apo Hiking Society gamely played Cupid a few days before V-day. “We got an unusual request from a young guy who wanted his wife of two years back,” related Jim Paredes. “He asked us to serenade his wife for him with our song ‘Panalangin’ at her office. Looks like it worked because the guy told us the day after that his ex-wife agreed to have lunch with him. He plans to marry her all over again.” For sure, Apo will happily oblige to sing at the wedding.

Wrong spelling

Gretchen Barretto sent me this text: “It’s Dody not Dodie and Tony not Tonee. So funny ...” She was referring to the names of the two people close to her heart that were inadvertently misspelled in a previous column. She makes it seem like a simple name game. Whose name is at stake, anyway?

No gimmick?

GMA 7 turns another classic Pinoy movie into a compelling TV series in “Sine Novela Presents Kaputol ng Isang Awit,” which premieres today on Dramarama sa Hapon.

Based on the 1991 blockbuster about two women from different worlds who seek the same dream, the series stars Lovi Poe, Jolo Revilla, Glaiza de Castro and Marky Cielo.

Wasn’t Jolo and Lovi’s romance cooked up to pave the way for their team-up in the series?

“Jolo’s been courting me for four months now,” said Lovi. “It’s no gimmick.” What has Jolo changed in her? “He has taught me not to be judgmental.”

Leave the judging to l’amour if their hearts are worthy of each other.

PERSONAL FINANCE

6 money lessons for new graduates

Question: I’m set to graduate from college this April. I’m excited that finally I’m done with my studies and will earn my own money soon. My parents told me that once I graduate from college, they won’t give me allowance anymore, so this gives me added motivation to get a good job. I also want to be financially secure. What tips can you give on how I can handle my earnings well? —Anna M.

Answer: If only all new graduates were like you, Anna, then many people won’t have to worry about their finances for the rest of their lives. The sad fact is, many of us realize that we’ve been handling money wrong when we’re already deep in debt or can’t go beyond living from paycheck to paycheck.

Money habits have to be started young, and this is a wonderful time to do so before you even earn your first pay. Just heed our six tips down below and you’ll be on the road to financial security in no time.

1. Be smart about job-hunting.

You’re armed with a diploma

and skills necessary to land a good job. There are many jobs available out there, but it doesn’t make sense to grab the first one the very next day after your graduation.

Do your homework. Find out where your skills and talents may be put to good use. If you’re good at selling, then look at jobs in sales. If you enjoy organizing events then maybe you’re a fit for a marketing job. This is because if you’re in a job where you’re a good fit, you’ll excel in no time. And when you excel, not only will you advance in your career faster, you will earn more money faster too.

After you’ve zeroed in on the kind of job that may fit you, research on the top companies that may be in need of people to fill in that job. Then think about what would be practical—take into consideration where you live. It may not make sense to apply for a job two hours away from where you live when you could get the same kind of job at the same salary at your place.

When you have applied for a job and have received an offer, weigh the pros and cons carefully. Look not just at the gross salary offered, but at the

benefits and costs to you as well (e.g., transportation). Your salary will have deductions for Social Security, health insurance, and other benefits such as a retirement plan if your company offers it. Make sure that after all these have been taken out of your pay and after you have made allowances for your day to day expenses you will still have some money left.

2. Make a budget.

On your first month at your new job, jot down all your expenses daily. Tally this at the end of the month to give you an idea how much you generally need to spend for food, transportation, and other needs.

Then make a budget that’s realistic. Set aside money for savings. Put a cap amount on food and other expense items. And try your best to keep to your budget—the secret to doing that is in number 3 below.

3. Commit to live below your means.

Live a lifestyle that won’t bust your budget. For instance, if you’re earning P20,000 a month, your expenses for the month should not go beyond that amount. In fact, it should

not even go beyond 80 to 90 percent of that, since you have to make room for savings.

This may mean some belt-tightening. Take the MRT or bus instead of a taxi. Bring *baon* to the office instead of always eating out for lunch or snacks. When buying clothes and shoes, prefer locally made ones with good quality. Limit going to the movies to once a month at most; buy or rent DVDs instead. There are many things you can do to ensure that you don’t overspend.

4. Save.

Before you even spend a single centavo from your paycheck, set aside 10 to 20 percent of your net income for savings. Some people find that opening a separate account for their savings helped them save and keep their hands away from it.

The good news is that your savings will grow over time through compound interest. So the earlier you start the savings habit, the better.

Make it your goal to shore up money for an emergency fund which will cover six months’ worth of expenses. This will tide you over should something happen in the future, such as a job loss or illness.

5. Get a credit card but

use it wisely.

A credit card can be good as it will be convenient when you need to buy big-ticket items or when you don’t have enough cash to purchase something you really need. By using a credit card for regular expenses, you will also keep a record of your purchases, making it easier for you to track down your spending, aside from racking up points in the rewards program which you can exchange later on for a gift item of your choice. Having a credit card will also help you establish a credit record, which may come in handy in the future should you want to avail of a housing loan to build your dream house.

But use your credit card wisely. Don’t use it to overspend on things you don’t really need. Be a responsible credit card user and pay your balances on time. It would be better if you can fully pay off the amount due every month, instead of just paying the minimum amount due to save on interest charges. For more tips on how to use credit wisely, log on to Citibank’s homepage: www.usecreditwisely.citibank.com.ph.

6. Invest your savings.

There are many options as to where you can invest your

savings. Look beyond savings accounts, as these offer only a minimal interest. You can invest in time deposits, pooled funds such as mutual funds and unit investment trust funds, and even equities.

You can also invest your savings in real estate or a new business venture. Before making any investment decision, talk to a financial advisor, read investment tips, and make sure you understand all there is to the investment.

What is the goal of investment? It’s to ensure that in the future, you’ll have enough funds needed for your family’s needs and for your retirement. And that’s financial security for you.

INQUIRER.net and Citibank invite readers to ask questions regarding financial matters. Send your questions to personal_finance@inquirer.net. Readers are solely responsible for their own investment decisions and should thus conduct their own research and due diligence and obtain professional advice. INQUIRER.net will not be liable for any loss or damage caused by a reader’s reliance on information obtained from our web site.

INQUIRER.net

Maharlika – Opinyon

A day in Northern Leyte

They advertised it as a Super Shuttle Ferry. We used to call them the Ro-Ro barge because one can just drive into the barge with one's vehicle and cargo. It was our mode of transport two decades ago from Cebu City to Ormoc City in Northern Leyte in the Visayas. It was a seven-hour trip, normally leaving Cebu in the evening and arriving Ormoc early in the morning. We sailed the same type of ship Friday night on a 24-hour foray into former First Lady Imelda Marcos' territory.

The night trip across the inland sea was itself uneventful. The ship did not bother to sell tourist berths in the air-conditioned room so we slept on the open double-bunk tejas. The fresh air was a respite from the carbon monoxide of the city traffic, or so we thought, until past midnight when suddenly, we were engulfed by a sooty cloud of diesel fumes. The gas effluent was getting sucked into the sleeping quarters and all the passengers responded simultaneously with a corporate sneeze.

I was on a day trip to Leyte to join my host family's occasional foray into the family farm in Barangay San Jose in Ormoc, long cultivated by faithful and hardworking tenants. I was in Cebu on a two-week medical leave for an MRI test on the cervical spine, and came prepared for a possible surgery. The MRI revealed a spur (bone growth) located on the spine that might be irritating spinal nerves, causing the tingling on the right arm and the numbing of the right thumb. Since medication, physical therapy and weight-loss regimen (to lighten spine stress from midsection load) were the recommended intervention measures before considering surgery, a trip to the countryside and memory lake was thus, appropriate and desirable.

It was four bells when we docked in the city that I last remembered as one that survived a momentous deluge in 1991. It was too early for moving about anywhere except in the little shops around the public market where home-brewed cocoa were common fare, along with the ever popular pan de sal, or the coco leaf-wrapped sticky rice. Barkers near the market were calling for passengers for "Pasay" and "Cubao." It appears that a 32-hour luxury bus ride from Leyte to Metro Manila is now on a daily schedule.

Ormoc now sports a mile-long flood prevention canal built with the assistance of Japan's JICA. The deluge of 1991 scraped the topsoil from neighboring hilltops leaving a track of devastating silt in its wake. Infrastructure such as the dikes and other community structures like the superdome and the port park amenities were the result of the labors of my fellow teacher at San Vicente Elementary School when she was the city's development officer. Happily for SVES, 4th grade teacher Cris Yohannan puts the same level of intensity and passion to her teaching responsibilities as she did when she was guardian to Ormoc's development efforts! Unhappily, PSS has a penchant not only for not recognizing the talents in her midst but also penalizing them for not fitting into the narrow straitjacket of what it considers "highly qualified teachers."

FAQ

There's an FAQ ("Frequently Asked Question" for the uninitiated) you get to hear these days. It is: "How do you get rid of Arroyo if she refuses to go?"

It's a question I've heard, or seen, in various guises. One of the most bizarre is people saying that while they believe Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is corrupt as hell, they're not joining any move to make her resign because it's useless, she won't resign anyway. Might as well wait till 2010. Since the huge rally last Friday, the question has become: What now? If she continues to refuse to resign—as she likely will—what do we do? What can we do?

Well, first off, if Arroyo won't resign now, what makes you think she'll do so in 2010? As everyone points out, if she resigns now, she will be extremely vulnerable. Out of power, she can be prosecuted like Joseph Estrada, and will most likely be so given that her corruption is far bigger and better known. Out of power, she can have a class suit filed against her by the kin of the victims of human rights abuses, and will most likely be so given the killings and abductions, notably of Jonas Burgos. And those are the least of her worries: Out of power, she will have blood debts to pay.

But for those very same reasons, why on earth would she give up power in 2010? The routine answer is that because by then her time will be up.

My question there is: So what? Why should someone whose time never began be bothered by the fact that her time is up? Why should someone who didn't mind changing the rules in 2004 (or well before that, in 2002 when she said she wouldn't run) mind changing the rules in 2010? Certainly, her need to stay in power would remain just as desperate then as, if not more so than, now.

The Arroyo regime's biggest albatross is not corruption, it is usurpation. Or its biggest theft is not the theft of money, it is the theft of the vote. A President who doesn't mind ruling illegitimately today won't mind ruling illegitimately tomorrow. If you can't make her go

Given the early hour, engaging a tricycle for the ride to San Jose a few miles outside of the city made sense, not only because it afforded us the touring pace and the scenic space but also provided a decent fare to one of the city's hard driving entrepreneurs. Smoke from outdoor hearths wafted across traffic-less lanes of the public road as the dawn emerged from the east, and the countryside green-eries began to give shape to homes and manicured farms.

Our venerable four-score and some, prolific and inveterate writer/novelist F. Sionil Jose not too long ago gathered his commentaries published by the Philippine Star under the title, "Why are we poor?" He laments the decline of post-WWII Philippines' economic health, which was at the top of the heap and envy of many, to now being the mendicant has-been of Asia wallowing in penury and indigence.

A previous trip to the State of Maharastra in India, noticing the general poverty under limited resources and overwhelming population, from the urban nomads of Mumbai (Bombay) to the excluded untouchables of the outlawed caste system in the outskirts of the Aurangabad fortress and the famed Ellora Caves in the Deccan plateau, gave a clear explanation of widespread poverty. An ingrained cultural system of legal discrimination and social prejudice, in a tableau of limited concentrated-in-the-hands-of-the-few misappropriated resources, offered a rationale for the prevailing state of being.

None of these were to be found in the early Ormoc morning of verdant land and seemingly healthy farm hands and dwellers in the land of the morning. The mist hovering over the sugar plantations that are milled in Kananga looked picture-perfect for those longing for the real dampness of clean air no longer available even in the breezy and ocean-mist drenched streets of San Francisco. But one can smell the scent of poverty in the nooks and crannies of this blessed land. The marks of malnutrition may not be evident but it is there, nor threads of plague and health threats of epidemic proportions talked about (though the rumored numbers of dengue fever casualties was alarmingly high), the more debilitating and humiliating scars out of a culture of poverty is unmistakable in the manifest anger of hardened suspicious eyes and looks of hopelessness among the restless young.

The existence of sugar plantations harken to the age of lazy gentleman farming where the tenants danced to the music of the hacendados, tenants pacified by their cries at the cockpit where their cocks are pitted one against another under the aegis of the town padrones while they wait out the maturing of the cane. The produce, long guaranteed a market in Uncle Sam's charity, is no longer in our time a precious entity.

I remember a friend's family in Negros Occidental lamenting the decline of their living standard when the global price of sugar fell and they were reduced to a household of only having one Mercedes Benz rather than the customary two!

To be sure, there is the noblesse oblesse character deeply ingrained

now, you can't make her go then.

The point is not for her to resign, it is for us to compel her to. You do not send criminals to jail with their permission, you send them to jail with their feet chained, whether they like it or not. The ruled are not powerless in the face of an unwanted ruler. The citizens are not powerless in the face of an unelected leader. Even without a military solution, there's no dearth of ways to loosen a usurper's grip. Though while at this, I don't know why the officers and gentlemen of the Armed Forces shouldn't consider that solution at all, with the help of the people. The duty of a soldier is to follow the chain of command, it is not to be a link in the chain of evil. The duty of a soldier is to obey an order that serves and protects the citizens, it is not to obey an order that serves and protects their oppressors.

The Nuremberg trials long ago affirmed that "obeying orders" is not an excuse for forgetting right and wrong. You obey an order to maim and kill, you will have to answer to God or conscience, judge and jury, when the time comes. You disobey that order, you can hold your head up high and call yourself a true soldier as you stand.

Quite apart from that, there is always the weapon of mounting bigger and bigger rallies. Never underestimate the power of an idea, never underestimate the force of moral suasion. The people who went to Ayala last Sunday were right: The crowd was the statement. Never underestimate the power of statements. They are trumpet blasts that brought down the walls of Ferdinand Marcos in the past, they are battering rams that will break down the ramparts of Arroyo soon. Bigger and bigger rallies are the sign of the times, the writing on the wall, the last nail on the coffin. They presage the end of tyrants, they precipitate the end of tyrants.

And still quite apart from that, there is the weapon of civil disobedience. There is the weapon of (not very) passive resistance. If I recall right, that was used by Cory and company more than two decades ago when they were fighting Marcos. And if I recall right, that was contemplated by those who were fighting Estrada almost a decade ago—not

By **JAIME VERGARA**
Special to the Saipan Tribune



in some of the country's landed elegance, members of my host family included, but there remains a fundamental and systematic contradiction prevailing with the inherited practices of land ownership in the country. An Ateneo University study once claimed that 1,600 families in a country of more than a hundred million people owned a majority of the alienable and disposable land of the citizenry. The patterns of tenancy, so archaic as to be the first object of agrarian reform in such places as Malaysia, Korea, Taiwan, Japan, and China, is deeply ingrained as a nationalistic feature of Philippine agrarian relations, much to F. Sionil Jose's chagrin in his essays. He traces the root of Philippine economic contradictions on this failure of the nation after WWII to release the value of land into the public domain so that it could be utilized by a broader constituency.

I had joined the party not just for the ride but because my host's uncle, a retired cowboy in Tabango, Leyte, who successfully raised a family of seven children to become professionals of independent means around the world, desires to turn his 330-acre farm into a forest preserve in perpetuity. I had come to do an ocular survey of the land, talk some more with the owner on what he really wants to do with his property, and how an old hand like the network of soil and water conservation folks in the region I am familiar with might be of assistance.

The situation presented the old conundrum of protecting the environment by reverting it back to a previous pristine condition away from human encroachment against the need for sustained development that would benefit a burgeoning population hungry for land. A former head of a fertilizer company established at the Leyte Industrial Park was also on hand to ensure representation of the investor and private sector perspective. We had a good visit and healthy exchanges of views transpired, some latently contradictory, others, not unpleasantly complementary. The political, economic and cultural ramifications of the landowner's intent is the content of the "consulting" groups product for consideration and implementation.

The old but impressive free-WiFi-at-the-lobby refurbished Don Felipe Hotel and the waiting service staff of the Chito Chow restaurant capped our trip before alighting into the 3-hour JetCat service of the two-hulled catamaran that plied the Cebu-Ormoc sea lane.

F. Sionil Jose's query nagged the consciousness, for his answer is double-edged: We are not only poor materially, we also now suffer the poverty of the spirit. Now, that's another journey of consciousness worth undertaking.

THERE'S THE RUB

By **CONRADO DE QUIROS**
Philippine Daily Inquirer



least by Arroyo. Except that Estrada fell well before the weapon could be used. As it turned out, the threat was powerful enough.

In fact, that's not easier said than done, that's easier done than said. It's the hardest thing to make Filipinos do, it's the easiest thing to make us not do. Which is what civil disobedience or passive resistance consists of: not doing. It is, as friends of mine suggest, not filing taxes (which still entails the withholding of residual amounts from a corrupt government, notwithstanding that much of your hard-earned pay is already taken from you by withdrawn tax and indirect taxes), not sending (by overseas Filipino workers in particular) of remittances through official sources (the dues and fees from which, as shown by PhilHealth, will be used only to fund the election campaign of administration candidates), being absent en masse from government offices, including the Philippine National Police and Armed Forces (conscientious or conscience-stricken cops and soldiers suddenly being stricken ill on the day they are supposed to bash the heads of demonstrators), and so on. Feel free to pitch in and add to the list.

To the charge that this will derail the economy and subvert democracy, you can always retort: Stealing money derails the economy, stealing the vote is, well, forget subverting democracy, it's just plain evil. The principle is simple: The citizens are not powerless before an unwanted leader. An illegitimate president refuses to go, a legitimate citizenry can always refuse to obey. An unwanted leader refuses to disappear, a wanted citizenry can always refuse to appear.

You can't operate where there's no one left to cooperate.

Maharlika – Samu’t Sari



TAU GAMMA PHI CELEBRATION
The Tau Gamma Phi celebrated the first anniversary of the Northern Mariana Islands Council Triskelion Grand Fraternity International Council on Jan. 27, 2008, at the Oleai pavilion.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Tau Gamma Phi's officers Jimmy, Edgar, Edwin, Erick, Frederick, Larry and Rio.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Tau Gamma Phi's NMI Council and the Saipan & Tinian Chapters have their pictures taken.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Brothers Rio, Frederick, Reylan, Dhing, Edgar, Thandy, Anthony, Erick, Tirso, Jacob, Rodel, Bhoy, Edwin, Jhun, Bernie, Ernie, Larry and Arnold.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The TM Boys joins the first anniversary celebration of the Tau Gamma Phi on Jan. 27, 2008, at the Oleai pavilion.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



GRAN DIVAS
Jolina hits the high notes during the final night of the Grand Diva Lip Sync Contest called "The Grand Amazing Showgirls," Thursday night, held at the Hibiscus Hall of the Fiesta Resort and Spa Saipan.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ



Grand Diva Lip Sync Contest first runner up winner Sharmaine of ASKS Beauty Salon wows the crowd with her amazing performance.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ



Grand Diva Lip Sync Contest Most Amazing Beauty winner Venus of Serenity Salon and Spa gives an elegant performance.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ



Tammy delivers an astounding performance at the Hibiscus Hall of Fiesta Resort and Spa Saipan during the final night of the Grand Diva Lip Sync Contest called "The Grand Amazing Showgirls".

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ



MALIGAYANG KAARAWAN
Clerisse Ilanah Dacumos turned four years old last Sunday, March 2. Birthday greetings your Mom, your friends, and family.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Youngstyle

Girl Scouts go to 'college' to learn about selling

By **MOIRA E. MCLAUGHLIN**
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WASHINGTON—Warning: The following song, set to the tune of "Are You Sleeping," is addictive. Once you start singing it, it will be in your head all day. Okay, here goes:

Girl Scout cookies/ Girl Scout cookies

Yum, yum, yum/ Yum, yum, yum
Eat 'em by the dozen/ Eat 'em by the dozen

They're all gone/ They're all gone.

For the Girl Scouts, the annual January-March cookie season is about more than eating the yummy treats. It's about selling them.

That's why 185 girls from the Washington area gathered recently for a one-day "cookie college"—to learn about safe and successful selling. For example, don't go into a cookie buyer's house and only go door-to-door with an adult.

The girls learned about the history of the cookie drive and talked about what they wanted to do with the money they raise—locally, troops keep 60 cents of the \$3.50 per-box cost.

At the end of the day, the scouts put on graduation caps they made and received cookie college diplomas. Not that they need them: For the last six years, Washington-area Girl Scouts have outsold every other council in the country. Last year's sales totaled about \$14 million.

This year, scouts in the nation's capital council set their goal at 4.2 million boxes. That's a lot of Thin Mints, Samoas and the rest.

Jacey Max, a third-grader from Troop 3865 in Potomac, Md., said she tries to be as nice as possible to any potential buyer. She and her younger sister, Eden, sold 300 boxes door-to-door this season. Jacey hopes that her troop will go to the National Aquarium in Baltimore with the money the scouts earn.

Jacey's troop mate, Skyler Boots, sold about 150 boxes. She likes to suggest which cookies a buyer might enjoy. For diabetics, she notes that the scouts sell sugar-free chocolate chip cookies. "If they don't know what they like, I suggest Thin Mints because everybody loves Thin Mints," she said.

Indeed, Thin Mints are the most popular Girl Scout cookie.

If Taylor Sielinski's feet hurt, it's no surprise. A member of Troop 6166 in Centreville, Va., she spends up to six hours on Saturdays during cookie season selling door-to-door. When she came to cookie college, Taylor, who is in the fifth grade, had sold 500 boxes, well on her way to her goal of 700.

Promyce Miller, a fourth-grader in Troop 5481 in Oxon Hill, Md., took a different approach. She made a list of family and friends who bought last year, e-mailed them about the cost and new cookies offered this year, and asked if they wanted to buy. She sold 603 boxes.

The best part, said Kirsten Beverly, of Troop 6593 in Fort Washington, Md., is seeing "people smile when they get the cookies. They're really happy."



THE WASHINGTON POST

Virginia Girl Scouts Madison Meredith, left, of Dale City, and Olivia Davis, of Woodbridge, celebrate graduation from "cookie college." There were 185 girls at the one-day class in Chevy Chase, Md., which helped boost the area's sales total to more than 4 million boxes.

YUMMY HISTORY

It all began in 1917 in Oklahoma. Wanting to raise money for troop activities, same as today, some Girl Scouts baked cookies at home—with their moms' help—and sold them.

In 1922, scouts across the nation started baking sugar cookies to sell door-to-door. By 1948, all of the cookies were made by baking companies.

For scouts today, March is booth sales month, so if you're out and about, look for a Girl Scout! (© 2008, *The Washington Post*)

BY THE NUMBERS

200 million: Boxes of Girl Scout cookies sold last year in the United States

\$700 million: Total cookie sales nationwide last year

25-30 cents: Price of a dozen cookies in 1922

\$3.50: Price of a box today

Sources: *Girls Scouts of the USA*

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Sugar Cookies Recipe

This is an early Girl Scout cookie recipe.

- 1 cup butter
- 1 cup sugar plus additional amount for topping (optional)
- 2 eggs
- 2 tablespoons milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons baking powder

DIRECTIONS: Cream butter and the cup of sugar; add well-beaten eggs, then milk, vanilla, flour, salt and baking powder. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour. Roll dough, cut into trefoil shapes and sprinkle sugar on top, if desired. Bake in a quick oven (375) for approximately 8 to 10 minutes or until the edges begin to brown. Makes six- to seven-dozen cookies.

Source: *Girl Scouts of the USA*

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Seuss fans: The Dr. will quiz you now

By **JENNIFER FREY**
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Happy Birthday to Theodor Geisel, known to readers far and wide as Dr. Seuss. He was born 104 years ago Sunday in Springfield, Mass. Although he died in 1991, he is remembered and honored each year at this time with Read Across America Day.

As our tribute, KidsPost has written a Seuss-a-quiz to challenge those of you who think you are Seuss experts because you remember things like what day the Whos first called out to Horton and where the Cat in the Hat sat that time he came back.

Let's start with a few easy questions. Then we'll see who gets stumped.

1. Who wants his friend to eat green eggs and ham?

2. What is the name of the Grinch's little dog?

3. Which Seuss character claims that he can read with his eyes shut?

Feeling confident you'll ace this quiz? Keep going.

4. In "One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish," what is the name of Mr. Gump's creature with seven humps?

5. Which book has "terrible tongue twist-ers" about Pete Pats

Pigs and the Fuddnuddler Brothers?

6. Complete the missing five-part name from this passage in "Oh, the Places You'll Go!":

So ...

Be your name Buxbaum or Bixby or

Bray

Or _____

You're off to Great Places!

Today is your day!

Your mountain is waiting.

So ... get on your way!

7. On what date and in what jungle did Horton first hear a Who?

You've got to admit, it's getting trickier. These last three will separate the Seuss-a-fans from the Seuss-a-fakers.

8. Which story features Dr. Derring's Singing Herrings as well as funicular

goats?

9. In "The Cat and the Hat Comes Back," where was the first place the cat went when he entered the house, and what did he eat there? (Bonus points if you know the four-line rhyme that describes this.)

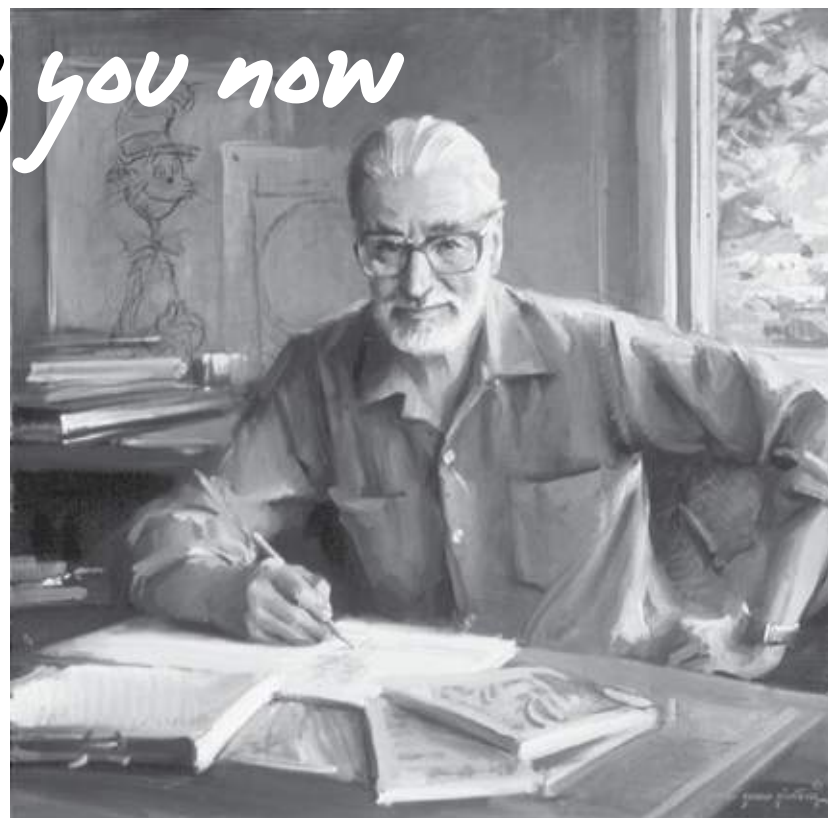
10. In writing "The Cat in the Hat," Geisel challenged himself by using a limited number of words from an elementary-age vocabulary list. How many different words did he use?

ANSWERS:

1. Sam-I-Am.
2. Max
3. The Cat in the Hat
4. The Wump
5. "Oh Say Can You Say?"
6. Mordecai Ali Van Allen O'Shea
7. On the 15th of May in the jungle of Nool
8. "Happy Birthday to You!"
9. "Do you know where I found him?/ You know where he was?/ He was eating a cake in the tub!/ Yes he was!"
10. 236

KidsPost has written a Dr. Seuss quiz to challenge those of you who think you are Seuss experts. Here, a stack of Dr. Seuss classics.

THE WASHINGTON POST



THE WASHINGTON POST

Theodor Geisel, shown here in a portrait by Everett Raymond Kinstler and known to readers as Dr. Seuss, was born 104 years ago Sunday in Springfield, Mass. Although he died in 1991, he is remembered and honored each year at this time with Read Across America Day.

ALL ABOUT READING

More than 45 million people are expected to take part Monday in the 11th annual Read Across America Day. Kids of all ages will be grabbing good books and curling up in cozy corners. Why not join them?

Ask your teacher or librarian to recommend a title. Or check out the book reviews at www.kidspost.com. Remember: It doesn't have to be a special day to enjoy a book. Every day is a good reading day. (© 2008, *The Washington Post*)

Md. artist brings underwater creatures to life



THE WASHINGTON POST

Chevy Chase, Md., author-illustrator Susan Stockdale tries to capture how she feels about her subjects: "If you wanted something exact, do a photo. But art is something different, something deeper."

By **RAYMOND M. LANE**
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON—"I start with words," says author-illustrator Susan Stockdale.

"Spiked fish, striped fish, sand fish, land fish, clownfish, round fish—anything that comes out of my head. I want to hear what my book might SOUND like first."

Stockdale, a mother of two who lives in Chevy Chase, Md., is explaining how her newest work, "Fabulous Fishes," came to be. Like her previous books, it's mostly for young children, but don't be fooled by the simple rhyming pattern. Every turn of the page reveals vivid paintings of exotic as well as common underwater creatures to delight all ages.

If the paintings are the feast, Stockdale's words are the dessert. And she selects them carefully.

"Words are always important, and they were really fun when I was growing up," she says. Her childhood was spent in Florida and Ireland, where her father was U.S. ambassador. Stockdale fondly

recalls how her mother, a published poet, used words "creatively to enchant her five kids."

"Mom would make things up, right at the dinner table: 'Suzie, Suzie, strong and able, get your elbows off the table,' for example," she says, laughing. "Who can forget to keep their elbows off the table with such a line from their mother?"

Words were just the beginning of "Fabulous Fishes."

"Once I had them down on paper I had to go right to the library because I didn't know what I was talking about," she says, laughing again. "Clownfish? Spiked fish? I made all that up in my head."

Apparently Stockdale hadn't seen "Finding Nemo," because it was at the library she discovered that "sure enough, there is a clownfish, a beautiful striped thing that lives among poisonous sea anemones. And there really is a spiked fish, the porcupinefish."

That was just the beginning of a year of hard work to produce the book. Scientific help came from experts at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History and the Monterey Bay Aquarium in California.

Stockdale and her husband even took up snorkeling so she could be "right in the water with the fish." Her biggest thrill was when her snorkeling guide waved her over, pulled back a rock and there, looking up at her, was a porcupinefish—the spiked fish of her story!

The porcupinefish, when frightened, puffs itself up so it won't fit in a predator's mouth.

"This little guy was all eyes and a tiny mouth and this big, puffy body," she recalls. "It was so cute, I think I smiled so hard I nearly drowned."

Back on land, the challenge was to capture what she "felt about that fish," not precisely what it looked like. "That's what art does," she explains. "If you wanted something exact, do a photo. But art is something different, something deeper."

It's a feeling she first experienced when she was 5 and went to an arts camp in Florida.

"I did this animal drawing, and I remember being so excited about creating art and just being with people who did art," she says. "It's what I tell all the kids when I do school visits: You can be an artist and write books if you just try."

Stockdale visits 50 to 60 schools each year. "Every time I'm in a classroom, I hear kids say, 'When I grow up I'm going to be a painter' or writer or whatever. I always ask, 'Are you doing art today? Are you writing today?'"

If the answer is yes, she responds: "Then you are a painter, you are a writer, a poet. You don't have to wait to be 53 years old like me. You can do art right now."

To learn more about Stockdale, go to www.susanstockdale.com.

Fantasy book pick

By **AMY ORNDORFF**
(C) 2008, THE WASHINGTON POST

Henry York's parents were a bit overprotective when he was growing up, so he is scared of just about everything. After his parents disappear while on a trip to South America, 12-year-old Henry moves to his aunt and uncle's farm in Kansas and learns how to do the things that other children do, including playing baseball and drinking sodas.

Then he finds a real adventure.

In Henry's tiny attic room there is a big secret. Actually, there are 100 magical secrets.

By accident, Henry discovers a cupboard in the room that was long ago covered over with plaster. Slowly he chips away at the plaster to find 99 more cupboards.

Every door has a different look that hints at where it leads (a post office box leading to a post office, for example). The doors open onto other worlds, which Henry and his adventurous younger cousin, Henrietta, begin to explore.

Henry is called on to do some brave things while trying to figure out the mystery of the



"100 Cupboards" is the first book in a new fantasy adventure series by N.D. Wilson. There are humor and some lessons about love and bravery in the book.

THE WASHINGTON POST

cupboards. And he and Henrietta quickly realize that there are some doors that are never meant to be open.

There are some scary moments in this story, which is the first book in a new fantasy adventure series. There also are humor and some lessons about love and bravery. The ending leaves many questions unanswered (for Volume 2, no doubt), all but guaranteeing that this will be a must-read series.

DEATH AND FUNERAL ANNOUNCEMENT

† Consolacion Hocog Naputi

January 13, 1947 • March 4, 2008

She is survived by her:

Common-law husband: Jesus M. Mettao

Children and Grandchildren

- Sarah Naputi/Ricardo Borja (Lorilynn Borja, Colleen Borja, Richard Borja Jr., Idalynn Naputi)
- Henry/Harriett Naputi (Darsky Naputi, Darr Naputi, Perissa Naputi, Darton Naputi, Irvin Okaruru)
- George Naputi/Nora Mendiola (Connie Naputi, Sean Naputi, Jesse Ryan Naputi, Michael Flores)
- Michael Naputi/Eleanor Dela Cruz (Mikilynn DLC. Naputi, Miguel DLC. Naputi, Michael Vincent Sanchez)
- MaryEvyonne/Larry Surigao (Metgot Larry Surigao, Tonyrose Surigao, Jarren Surigao)
- Vincent Mettao/Diane Villegas (Vianny V. Mettao, Jerome V. Mettao)

Great Grandchildren

- Matias Jesus Borja
- Lydia Lynn Borja
- Jonisha J. N. Borja
- Jomeka J. N. Borja
- Jonathan George N. Techur
- Dariann Naputi

Reared Son and Daughter

- Glen Henry Naputi
- Lorilynn Naputi Borja

Brothers, Sisters and In-Laws:

- Jose H./Hinara Naputi and children/children in-law
- Maria Saralu/Boy Maglaqui and children/children in-law
- Antonio H. Naputi and children/children in-law
- Elizabeth N. Dudley and children/children in-law
- Rosa H./Ambrocio Ayuyu and children/children in-law
- Miguel H. Naputi/Barbara Borja and children/children in-law
- Bernadita H. Naputi and children
- Lucia Ana H. Naputi and children

Auntie: Margarita N. Tenorio (Esang)

In Her new life, she now joins her:

Parents:

- † Enrique Ogo Naputi
- † Sara Hocog Naputi

Parents In-Law:

- † Jose P. Mettao
- † Maria M. Mettao

Brothers and Sister

- † Francisco Hocog Naputi
- † Vicente Hocog Naputi
- † Juanita Hocog Naputi

In-Law:

- † Carmen M. Saures
- † Nicanor M. Mettao

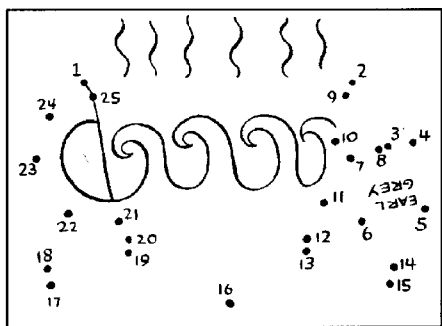
Grandson

- † Jesse Ryan M. Naputi

- † Carmen Mettao and children/children in-law
- † Nicanor M. Mettao and children/children in-law
- Isidro Mettao and children/children in-law
- Esteban Mettao and children/children in-law
- Ralph/† Rita Mettao and children/children in-law

*Thank You - Si Yu'us Ma'ase
Please join us in prayers.*

Jesus M. Mettao, Children and Family



CONNECT THE DOTS! My name has three letters. Take away two and my name's the same. What am I?

Answers: Tea.

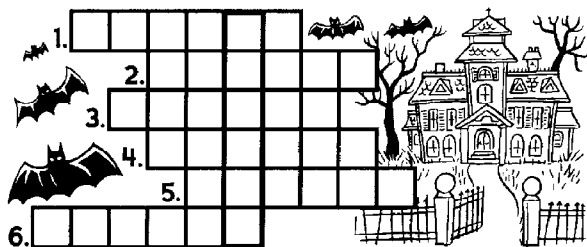
Illustrated by David Coulson

A TIME TO REFLECT! Study the four words to the right and see if you can determine what is unique about them.

Answers: The bottom half of each word is a mirror image of the top half. Turn this page upside down and look at it in the mirror. The words look the same.

FIND THE SEVEN WORDS PUZZLE! In the Word Square at the right, we've removed six of the letters to spell out the word "DENTAL." See if you can replace these letters in the square so that you will have four three-letter words across and three four-letter words down. The time limit is 60 seconds.

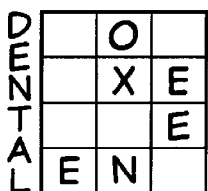
Answers: (Across) Ton, axe, lee, end, (down) Tale, oxen, need.



In the grid above, there's room for six words pertaining to the haunted house. The following definitions should help:

1. They live in the house.
2. Noises you hear in the house.
3. Type of passages in the house.
4. What you might hear in the house.
5. What might block your way.
6. Coldest, darkest part of the house.

There is a dark frame around one of the columns in our grid. If you correctly solve the puzzle, the letters in the frame, top to bottom, will spell out what you "feel" at midnight in the house.



Answers: 1. Ghosts. 2. Creaks. 3. Secret. 4. Scream. 5. Cobweb. 6. Terror.

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Strange BUT TRUE

By SAMANTHA WEAVER

■ It was German-born theoretical physicist (and sometime philosopher) Albert Einstein who made the following sage observation: "Two things are infinite: the universe and human stupidity, and I'm not sure about the universe."

■ You may be surprised to learn that studies show your brain is more active while you're asleep than it is while you're watching television. Then again, maybe that's not so surprising.

■ The country of South Africa has a total of 11 official languages.

■ Advertising is everywhere—you can't turn around without seeing dozens of pitches for some kind of product or service competing for your attention. Perhaps it's fitting, then, that the English word "advertise" comes from the Latin word "advertere," which means "to turn toward" or "to pay attention."

■ In the TV show "Charlie's Angels," it was a requirement that each of the stars have eight different outfits for each episode.

■ There are those who feel we should adopt the metric system of measurement, claiming that our current system is outdated and archaic. To go truly archaic, though, we could start measuring things in flags, baronies, falls, roods, townships and hides. Yes, those are actual terms of measurement. They equal, respectively, 25 square feet, 4,000 acres, 342 square feet, a quarter of an acre, 36 square miles and 10 acres.

■ The magnolia—that icon of genteel Southern life—is actually an entire family of plants, encompassing more than 200 species.

■ The golf tee was patented in 1899, but it wasn't put into official use until 1922.

Thought for the Day: "The only reason some people get lost in thought is because it's unfamiliar territory." —Paul Fix

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MAGIC MAZE • ALL THE —

B I E B Y V S Q N K H E B Y S
W T S R O L J E E G E B G N Y
W U R E S (T R I M M I N G S) R
P N K I L G W D B A O I Z X V
S Q K O M B O K I L S H G E C
A Y W C U S R Q Y P E N Y L J
H F E C U E L A A Y R X V A U
S Q P N T L D M M K O J H F W
E C B T S I Z Y X V M U T R Q
P O E M E H M N E M S G N I K
L B K I B W H E G A R G E D C

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

Best	Marbles	Same	Way home
Better	More so	Signs	While
Daylong	Rage	Time	World
Luck	Rest	Trimmings	

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GO FIGURE! by Linda Thistle

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

DIFFICULTY: ★

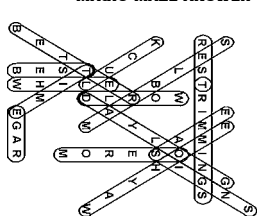
★ Moderate ★★ Difficult
★★★ GO FIGURE!

	+		x		21
x		x		÷	
	+		x		15
-		÷		+	
	-		x		20
23		9		7	

1 2 2 3 4 5 6 7 9

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MAGIC MAZE ANSWER



ALL THE —

GO FIGURE ANSWER

23		9		7	
7		x		÷	
20		+		x	
15		÷		+	
21		-		x	
5		2		+	

Cat-scratch fever is real disease

Q: Is there really such a thing as cat-scratch fever? —Jane T., Missoula, Mont.

A: Yes, there really is. Also called "cat-scratch disease," it's an infection that, while rare, can be passed from cat to human through direct transmission—through bites, scratches and even flea bites.

The bacterium that causes cat-scratch fever is called *Bartonella henselae*. Most infected cats don't show any symptoms—and most cats in the United States carry the bacteria. Adults with healthy immune systems rarely suffer from the illness if they're exposed. But cat-scratch disease can affect children and immune-compromised individuals, and they should receive treatment as soon as possible.

If you or a friend or family member develop a fever, malaise and headaches soon after being scratched or bitten by a cat, contact your doctor. The doctor can confirm whether the illness is cat-scratch fever or something else, and will prescribe the right medicine.

Cat-scratch fever, along with a few other diseases that can be transmitted between humans and cats—including ringworm and toxoplasmosis—under-



lines the importance of keeping pets healthy and free of fleas (which can transmit some illnesses from pets to humans) and keeping their bedding and litter areas as clean as possible.

If you or a pet are diagnosed with an illness, be sure to follow the doctor's advice and take (or give to your pet) medication exactly as prescribed, for the entire course of treatment. This will ensure that the infection is taken care of, and will minimize the chance of re-infection for both you and your pet.

Send your tips, questions and comments to Paws Corner, c/o King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475, or e-mail them to pawscorner@hotmail.com.

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Easy tarts from your family test kitchen

Get your creative juices going with your own family test kitchen, and bake something new and mouthwatering like these cherry chocolate tarts.

Mine are actually a spinoff of a new and easy recipe developed at Pillsbury's real test kitchen by test-kitchen expert Julie Hinderks for Pillsbury's Just Unroll! Pie Crusts. Not only did I get to taste her delicious Caramel Apple Marshmallow Tarts, but I got to work with a creative team to produce online videos with "how-to" steps and tips for baking tarts and a pie for pillsbury.com.

Inspired by the experience, I came up with these cherry chocolate tarts with my family. "There is no end to the combinations for these individual desserts," says Julie. "Develop your own spinoffs with other favorite ingredients, such as peach or blueberry pie filling." Let's get baking!

Tip: Before you get started, watch my new online video for making simple tarts for your family. Go to www.pillsbury.com and click on "Watch Donna Erickson."

For eight individual-size tarts, you'll need the following ingredients:

- 2 rolled-out rounds of pie dough, such as refrigerated pie crusts in the dairy case of your grocery store
- 1 cup cherry pie filling
- 1 cup fresh cherries, pitted and sliced in half (optional)
- 3 tablespoons chocolate topping

Heat oven to 400 F. Set pie crusts on work surface. With a 4-1/2-inch round cookie cutter, cut 4



rounds from each pie crust and place on an ungreased, large cookie sheet.

Spoon about 2 tablespoons pie filling onto the center of each pie-crust round. Add fresh cherries (optional).

Firmly fold edge of crust over sides of filling, ruffling decoratively. For fun, use small cookie cutters to make shapes out of remaining pie crust. Place in the center of each tart.

Bake 15-20 minutes or until crust begins to brown. Cool.

Serve with chocolate topping lightly drizzled over tarts.

Tip: If you don't have a round cookie cutter, a large stewed-tomato can or yogurt container makes

a dandy substitute. Turn it upside-down and press into the dough to make the shapes.

Donna Erickson's award-winning television series "Donna's Day" airs on public television nationwide. Visit www.donnasday.com to find out when it airs on your local PBS station and to sign up for Donna's e-newsletter.

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Life & Style

Spears' father gets \$2,500 per week

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Being Britney Spears' father is now a paying gig—through most of the summer, at least. A court has ordered the troubled pop star's estate to pay James Spears' \$2,500 in weekly compensation and authorized him to lease a car. On Wednesday, his authority to handle his daughter's affairs, which was scheduled to expire March 10, was extended until July 31.

Los Angeles Superior Court Commissioner Reva Goetz ordered the weekly payments in documents released by the court Thursday but signed on Wednesday. James Spears, who recently worked as a caterer, was named conservator of his daughter and co-conservator of her estate after she was hospitalized twice in January.

Goetz also ordered Spears' estate to make a \$58,800 payment to Samuel D. Ingham III, the court-appointed attorney who represents Britney Spears in the conservatorship case. She also authorized the pop star's psychiatrist to hire two other doctors and pay them retainers totaling \$9,000 from her estate.

An attorney for James Spears, Vivian Thoreen, argued in court documents that the extension of the temporary conservatorship was necessary because Jon Eardley, an attorney who made an unsuccessful attempt to move the probate case to federal court last month, had filed additional papers in U.S. District Court. Those documents were under seal.

In the past year, Spears was caught on camera engaging in increasingly bizarre behavior. She shaved her head, beat a vehicle with an umbrella, wore skirts without underwear and left her own car on a busy thoroughfare after getting a flat tire.

The strange outbursts and hospitalizations contributed to the 26-year-old losing custody of her young sons, Jayden James, 1, and Sean Preston, 2. Ex-husband Kevin Federline has sole custody.

Spears was allowed brief visits with the boys beginning in late February after not seeing them for nearly two months. That happened after Spears and Federline agreed to modify the court order that had stripped Spears of her visitation rights, according to Federline attorney Mark Vincent Kaplan.

'Idol' cuts 4 more, leaving 12 finalists

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The top 12 "American Idol" finalists include an actress, a "Star Search" champion, an Australian, a male stripper and someone who already recorded a debut album.

The popular Fox singing contest cut four contestants from the competition Thursday night, leaving a dozen finalists to vie for the show's record contract grand prize.

Next week, for the first time in the show's seven-year history, contestants will be allowed to sing Lennon-McCartney Beatles songs. ("Idol" producers recently secured rights for participants to perform the hard-to-get songs belonging to Sony/ATV Music Publishing, a company formed by Sony and Michael Jackson.)

More than 36 million votes were cast by viewers to pick the top 12, according to host Ryan Seacrest.

Among the finalists: Syesha Mercado, a 21-year-old actress who's appeared in a commercial for Ford; David Archuleta, a 17-year-old crooner who won CBS' "Star Search" in 2003 at age 12; and Michael Johns, a 29-year-old rocker who moved from Australia to the U.S. in 1998.

Four contestants—two women and two men—were sent home Thursday.

Kady Malloy, 18, from Houston, was the first to get the boot during the live telecast. Judge Simon Cowell called Malloy "forgettable" after she sang Queen's "Who Wants To Live Forever" on Wednesday's female performance show.

Luke Menard, 29, from Crawfordsville, Ind., was dismissed second. Menard appropriately reprised his performance from Tuesday's '80s-themed male performance show: "Wake Me Up Before You Go-Go."

Asia'h Epperson, 19, from Joplin, Mo., was third to go-go. Cowell had called Epperson a "second-rate" Whitney Houston after her rendition of "I Wanna Dance with Somebody."

Danny Noriega, 18, from Azusa, Calif., was the last semifinalist to be expelled. The over-the-top contestant, who sang "Tainted Love," was in tears following his removal. Seacrest called him "one of our most courageous performers ever."

Some of the 12 "Idol" finalists have already been at the center of personal controversies this season.

Carly Smithson and Kristy Lee Cook made headlines for having a pre-"Idol" record deals. Smithson's debut "Ultimate High" was released in 2001 by MCA Records. David Hernandez was



In this undated image released by FOX, "American Idol" contestant David Archuleta, 17, of Murray, Utah, is shown. It was no secret that Murray High School junior could sing, students and teachers had heard him belt out holiday carols during Spanish class and an opera aria at a school arts festival. But no one expected to see the shy and impish Archuleta transformed into a rising American Idol star.

outed as a male stripper at Dick's Cabaret in Phoenix to The Associated Press by the club manager Gordy Bryan. And a drunken driving arrest mugshot of Amanda Overmyer made the rounds on blogs.

The top 12 "American Idol" finalists:

- David Archuleta, 17, Murray, Utah
- Jason Castro, 20, Rockwall, Texas
- David Cook, 25, Blue Springs, Mo.
- Kristy Lee Cook, 24, Selma, Ore.
- Chikezie Eze, 22, Inglewood, Calif.
- David Hernandez, 24, Glendale, Ariz.
- Michael Johns, 29, Los Angeles
- Ramiele Malubay, 20, Miramar, Fla.
- Syesha Mercado, 21, Sarasota, Fla.
- Amanda Overmyer, 23, Mulberry, Ind.
- Carly Smithson, 24, San Diego
- Brooke White, 24, Mesa, Ariz.

Whoopi: Swayze is the reason I won Oscar

NEW YORK (AP)—Whoopi Goldberg says her friend Patrick Swayze—who was recently diagnosed with pancreatic cancer—is the reason why



Whoopi Goldberg holds her Oscar for Best Supporting Actress, won for her role in "Ghost," in Los Angeles in this, March 26, 1991, file photo.

she won an Oscar for "Ghost."

"When I won my Academy Award, the only person I really thanked was Patrick," Goldberg recalled Thursday on ABC daytime talk show "The View."

Goldberg, who starred alongside Swayze in the 1990 film, earned a best supporting actress trophy for her portrayal of psychic Oda Mae Brown, who helps slain businessman Sam Wheat (Swayze) communicate with his grieving fiancée and solve the mystery of his murder.

The 52-year-old actress-comedian said Swayze persuaded director Jerry Zucker to cast her in the film amid "some resistance." According to Goldberg, Swayze said, "I'm not making this movie unless you put Whoopi Goldberg in there."

Swayze, 55, has been undergoing treatment for pancreatic cancer, his representative Annett Wolf said Wednesday.

In a statement released by Wolf, Swayze's physician Dr. George Fisher said he was "optimistic" about the "Dirty Dancing" actor's prognosis for battling the disease: "Patrick has a very limited amount of disease and he appears to be responding well to treatment thus far."

Goldberg said she hadn't spoken to Swayze about his health.

"We want you to feel better—we'll talk soon, I hope," she said.

Man in love with his boss has only one focus at work

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



DEAR ABBY: When my new boss, a Marilyn Monroe look-alike, began working here five years ago, I immediately had a crush on her. Two years ago, I began working directly with her in the office and fell head-over-heels, smitten to the bone with her.

She's married, I'm married, and I have never made a pass. The problem is, I have become obsessed with her. I can't stop thinking about her all day. I dream about her at night. I feel I have never been in love like this, and it has reached the point where it consumes every second of my day.

I love my wife and would not want to jeopardize my life with her. But how can I stop this overwhelming passion that I feel for "Marilyn"? Please don't tell me to change jobs. That would be my worst nightmare. I can't picture my life without being at least able to see this woman and exchange pleasantries with her.

—LOST IN LOVE IN TAMPA

DEAR LOST IN LOVE: You said it yourself—you have become obsessed. This "grand passion" is not only unfair to your wife, it is also unfair to your boss because although she may remind you of Marilyn Monroe, I'll bet you dollars to doughnuts that she would rather be taken seriously.

As I see it, you have several choices: psychotherapy, aversion therapy or another job. Because psychotherapy can be expensive, and you won't change jobs, try this: Put a thick rubber band on your wrist. When you catch yourself lusting after Marilyn, give the rubber band a strong "snap." It will not only bring you back to the reality of the task at hand, but also the fact that you're married. With luck, you will begin to associate lusting after this woman with pain, and stop daydreaming when you're supposed to be working.

DEAR ABBY: I need your help. Senior prom is coming up, and there's this girl at school I'd like to ask, but frankly, I don't have the nerve. I know it's still a couple of months away, but I want to ask her before someone else does. Please, I really need advice.

—SCAREDY-CAT, KENAI, ALASKA

DEAR SCAREDY-CAT: There's a saying: "Nothing ventured, nothing gained." Asking for a date may seem risky because nobody wants to be told "no." But unless you take the risk, you will never hear "yes."

Talk to this girl at school. Start the conversation by asking her something about a class you're in together or what she thought about a sporting event. Then ask if she has plans for the prom. If her answer is no, then say, "Would you like to go with me?" It's that simple.

If talking to her at school would be too embarrassing for you, the alternative is calling her at home. If that's the way you'd prefer to do it, the directions are the same as in the paragraph above.

DEAR READERS: For those of you who live in states with daylight saving time, it begins at 2 a.m. tomorrow morning. So, remember the saying, "Spring forward, fall back," and set your clocks AHEAD one hour tonight at bedtime.

Fun fact: Daylight saving time is not observed in Puerto Rico, Guam, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Hawaii or Arizona. However, the Navajo Nation utilizes daylight saving time—even in the state of Arizona, because of its large size and location in three states. (Source: Webexhibits.org)

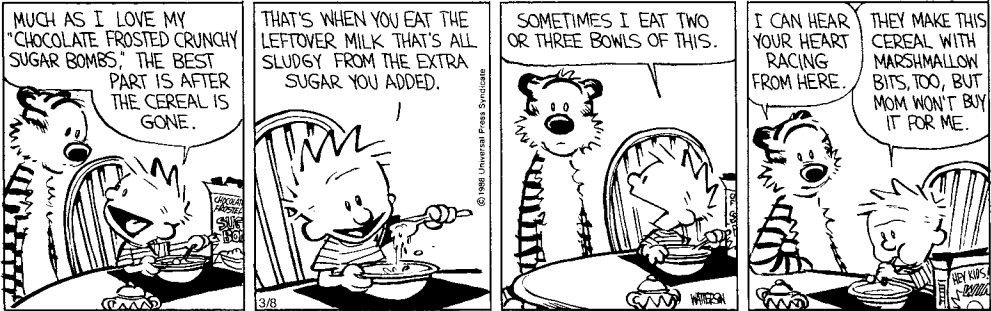
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

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Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



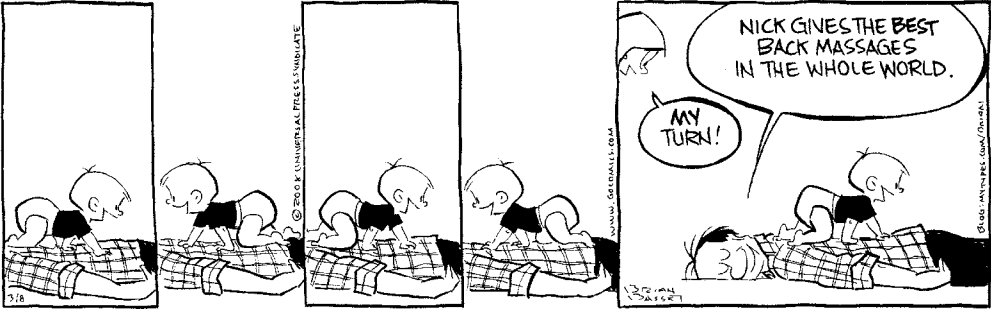
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



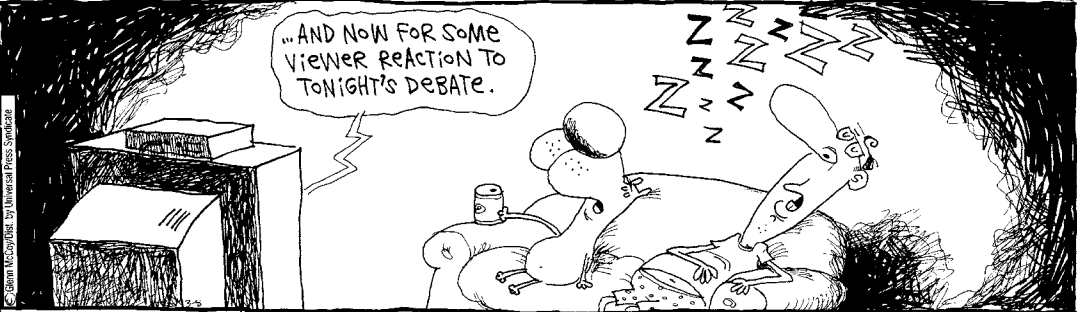
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Stirred course"

6 Triangular house

12 Shrew

13 Stimulating drink

14 Trust of a sort

15 Bar orders

16 Squad

17 Indian Ocean gulf

19 On a pension (Abbr.)

20 Staffer

22 Bro the

24 White House nickname

27 Soothing agent

29 "Arrivederci"

32 Monroe flick, with "The"

35 Mansion employee

36 Normandy battle site

DOWN

1 Saga-cious

2 Killer whale

3 Vibes

4 Freudian topic

5 Currently

6 Skilled

7 Drescher and Tarken-ton

8 Ex-garment

9 Biting quality

10 Unembellished

11 Formerly, formerly

12 Old hand

18 Taken out of context?

21 — Saud (Fr.)

23 Here

24 Doctrine

25 Mauna —

26 Malefactor

28 Seasick-ness

30 Blackjack part

31 Surprise cries

33 Maestro de Waart

34 Curtain holder

39 Pule

41 Hayseed

42 Breathe audibly

43 Farm fraction

45 On the rocks

47 Roll-call response

48 Rathskeller supply

49 Bond, for one

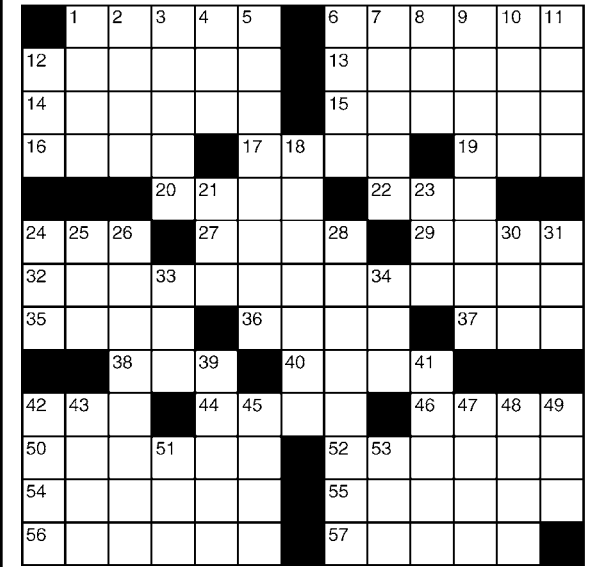
51 Homer's neighbor

53 Blackbird

Solution time: 27 mins.

D	A	Y	P	E	R	M	D	I	A	L
A	B	A	S	L	O	E	E	D	D	Y
N	E	W	H	A	V	E	N	L	A	Z
A	L	L	E	L	E	A	F	T		
			E	M	S	C	R	A	V	E
B	E	A	D	S	K	E	Y	E	V	A
O	A	R	S	L	I	D	P	A	I	R
A	C	E	P	E	N	D	A	L	L	Y
S	H	A	V	E	N	H	E	R		
		E	G	G	Y	A	K	I	M	A
S	H	A	G	T	H	E	R	A	V	E
I	O	W	A	H	U	N	T	E	R	E
P	E	E	N	Y	E	A	H	S	E	W

Yesterday's answer 3-8



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-800-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Bob Moffatt, 24; James Van Der Beek, 31; Freddie Prinze Jr., 32; Aidan Quinn, 49

Happy Birthday: Much will be covered up this year. You'll need to do your research and have conversations that may be a little uncomfortable in order to get to the truth. Prepare to deal with past issues, once and for all, and be honest in your assessment. There is so much to look forward to if you can leave the past behind you. Your numbers are 6, 22, 24, 28, 37, 41

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Keep your thoughts to yourself and you will be better positioned to challenge anyone you come up against. Sudden changes may backfire so think matters through thoroughly before you make your move. Keep things on a small scale. ***

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Don't rely on others and you will get what you want. You are in a good position to regulate how much you accomplish by keeping things secretive as you go along. Someone may try to entice you personally by fabricating a situation. ****

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): If you let your emotions take over, you will make poor choices. Don't promise too much or boast about your capabilities. Get your work done and avoid anyone who may slow you down. **

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You can make professional changes if you want but, before doing so, make sure you won't be jeopardizing your income. Don't make a move for emotional reasons. Instead, ride out whatever situation is bothering you and be patient. **

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Don't neglect or put off paying your bills or debts owed. Once you rid yourself of any financial problems, you will be able to enjoy your life, your family and your friends. Set up a good budget. ****

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Overspending is apparent, especially if you are trying to accommodate someone you love. Spoiling may seem to work at first but it won't get you the respect you want. Make some adjustments to the way you do things. ***

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Get caught up—now is not the time to be lazy. Be thankful you've been given the opportunity to catch up and complete what you started. Accomplishment will help to soothe your mind and lessen your stress. ***

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): A sudden change in your financial situation is apparent. Emotions will play an important role in what you purchase and how generous you are with friends and family. Act conservatively. ***

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Don't take anything or anyone for granted. Disappointment is in the picture if you don't stick to the rules set by authorities. Travel may be enticing but will lead to setbacks. **

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): An offer should be seriously considered. There is money to be made and it will come to you from an unexpected source. Open and direct communication will bring results that will help you move on. ****

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Do everything you can to secure and stabilize an important relationship. Take the initiative and make plans for things the two of you can do together. The more you participate with the person who means the most to you, the better your relationship will become. ***

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Someone will be watching and, if you are too emotional or open about your plans, you can expect to face some controversy. Play your cards close to your chest and you will stand a much better chance of getting the things you want to do off the ground and moving. ***

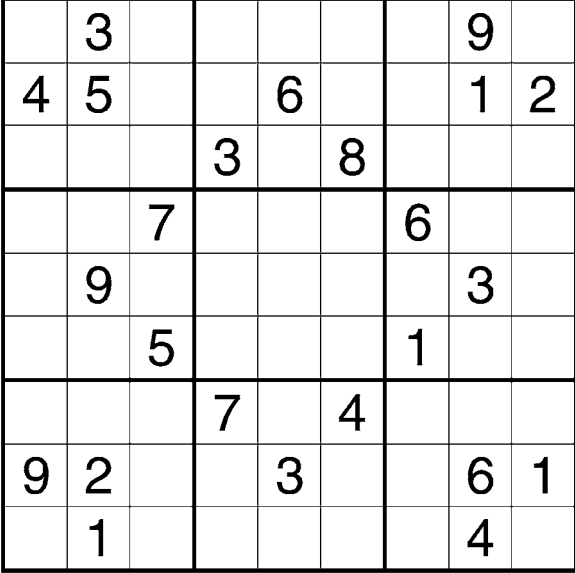
Birthday Baby: You are changeable and versatile, inventive, persuasive and intelligent. You can manipulate a crowd and charm others into doing things for you. You are a leader, a humanitarian and a competitor.

Eugenia's Web sites: astroadvice.com for fun, eugenialast.com for confidential consultations

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green



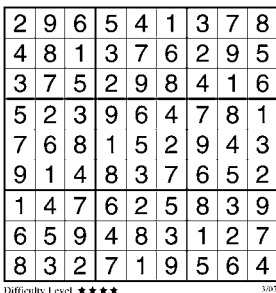
Difficulty Level ★★★★★

3/08

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer



Difficulty Level ★★★★★

3/07

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

PROM THEMES

Solution: 6 letters



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Attire, Balloons, Ballroom, Band, Boutonnieres, Candles, Casino, Colors, Committee, Coronation, Corsage, Costume, Creative, Crown, Dance, Destiny, Dining, Dreams, Future, Genre, Hotels, King, Lights, Limo, Love, Masquerade, Night, Paradise, Paris, Promenade, Queen, Retro, Shine, Social, Songs, Star, Suits, Ticks, Ties, Time, Tuxedo, Venues, Vest, Wishing
Yesterday's Answer: Keepsake
We listened to your request: TREASURY #6 is the first-ever Wonderword book containing only 20 x 30 puzzles, with 75 of these large puzzles. To order, send check or money order for \$10.95 each plus \$3.25 p&h (\$14.20 total each, U.S. funds only) for the first volume, \$15.00 p&h for each additional volume. To Wonderword, Universal Press Syndicate, 4529 Main St., Kansas City, Mo. 64111 or call toll-free 1-800-255-9734 ext. 6888. Order online at upuzzles.com

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Apartment room for rent: Fully furnished 1 brm, T/B, 24-hr water \$210/month, near Conwood | Tel. 287-1372, 235-6748

2 br furnished apartment w/ laundry facility. Beach Road. Close to beach walking path. \$400/mo. Call 483-1974.

3 Bedroom House for Rent. San Vicente area. Telephone No.: 483-8295

Apartment for Rent in Aslito. Fully furnished, 24 hrs water. Safe location. Call 256-3864/287-7769

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

2 COOK (THS 0007)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; medical & workman compensation provided. Contact: Da Kine, Inc. dba Hawaii Bar & Grill @285-3740.

1 BUILDING MAINTENANCE REPAIRER (THS 0008)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workers compensation. Contact: Islas Marianas, Inc. dba Ace Poker @233-2211.

1 SALES REPRESENTATIVE (THS 0009)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workers compensation. Contact: Islas Marianas, Inc. dba Ace Poker @233-2211.

1 OPERATION MANAGER (THS 0010)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workers compensation. Contact: Hanmi, Inc. dba Hanmi Hardware @233-2211.

1 ELECTRICIAN (THS 0011)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workers compensation. Contact: Hanmi, Inc. dba Hanmi Hardware @233-2211.

1 GENERAL MANAGER (THS 0012)
Salary:\$12.50/hour. Benefits: Employer provide housing; employee provide food; employer provides medical & workers compensation insurance. Contact: Calvo's Insurance Underwriters (CNMI) Inc. @234-5691/4/8.

1 ELECTRONIC TECHNICIAN (THS 0013)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workers compensation. Contact: Oriental Corporation dba Electronics World @233-1212.

2 MASON (THS 0014)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arrange housing; own food; medical & workmen's compensation. Contact: Lolita N. Palacios dba J&L House Rental @234-1081.

1 CARPENTER (THS 0015)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arrange housing; own food; medical & workmen's compensation. Contact: Lolita N. Palacios dba J&L House Rental @234-1081.

1 COMMERCIAL CLEANER (THS 0016)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arrange housing; own food; medical & workmen's compensation. Contact: Lolita N. Palacios dba J&L House Rental @234-1081.

1 BIOMEDICAL (SERVICE ENGINEER) TECHNICIAN (THS 0017)
Salary:\$5.00-\$15.00/hour. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; workers compensation as required by law & medical coverage as required by law. Contact: Pacific Biomedical Services, Inc. dba PBSI @288-0566.

1 VIDEO OPERATOR (SM 0016)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workmen's compensation. Contact: KP Enterprises, Inc. dba KP's Mart, KP Video Tape Production, KP Video, KP Accounting & Book Keeping @323-5568/433-2534.

1 GENERAL MANAGER (SM 0017)
Salary:\$1,500.00/monthly. Benefits: Free housing; self provided food; surety bond; medical & worksmen compensation. Contact: ASG Corporation dba Elite Printing @288-6465/2677.

1 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT (SM 0018)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arrange housing; self provide food; worksmen compensation & medical. Contact: Minami Kaze Corporation dba Minami Kaze Saipan @234-2101.

1 BUILDING MAINTENANCE REPAIRER (SM 0019)
Salary:\$700.00/monthly. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self provided food; medical & workers compensation. Contact: Milne & Reyes Enterprises @235-6657.

1 MAINTENANCE MECHANIC (SM 0020)
Salary:\$3.55-\$4.75/hour. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; medical; workmen's compensation & transportation self provided. Contact: Silk Road Corporation dba Saipan Country Club @234-8718.

3 GROUNDSKEEPER (SM 0021)
Salary:\$3.55-\$4.75/hour. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; medical; workmen's compensation & transportation self provided. Contact: Silk Road Corporation dba Saipan Country Club @234-8718.

1 PACKER (SM 0022)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workers compensation. Contact: Onwel Manufacturing (Saipan), Ltd. @234-9522.

1 UPHOLSTERER (SM 0023)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Workmen compensation & medical expenses. Contact: Sikayun Virginia G. dba 3A's Polyshine @235-8938.

1 TECHNICIAN AUTO (AUTOMOBILE ACCESSORIES INSTALLER) (SM 0024)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self housing; self food; workmen compensation & medical expenses. Contact: Sikayun Virginia G. dba 3A's Polyshine @235-8938.

1 MASSEUR/MASSEUSE (THS 0018)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self provided; workmen's compensation provided & transportation self arrange. Contact: Editha G. Welle dba Cristelle's Beauty Parlor @235-4536.

2 BEAUTICIAN (THS 0019)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self provided; workmen's compensation provided & transportation self arrange. Contact: Editha G. Welle dba Cristelle's Beauty Parlor @235-4536.

1 CONSTRUCTION WORKER (THS 0020)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self housing; self food; medical & workmen compensation. Contact: Unicorn Corporation @322-3364.

1 AUTO MECHANIC (THS 0021)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged food; medical & workmen's compensation provided. Contact: Joseph J.A. Pablo dba 3G's Services @233-7069.

1 DRESSMAKER (THS 0022)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; food not provided; medical & workmen's compensation provided. Contact: JAP Professional Corp. dba Lenchies Fashion @285-9500.

1 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT (THS 0023)
Salary:\$3.05/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; food not provided; medical & workmen's compensation provided. Contact: Rolando Lagartos dba R&R Auto Repair Shop @285-9500.

1 IRONER (THS 0024)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged

WHATZIT Solution:
All in a day's work

food; self arranged transportation to and from job; workmen's compensation & medical expenses. Contact: Shao Hongxia Jones dba Beauty Boutique & Dress Shop @287-8206.

1 A/C TECHNICIAN (THS 0025)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arrangement housing; self arrangement food; workmen's compensation & medical provided by employer. Contact: Gonzalo V. Pangellinan Jr. dba Pacific Airconditioning @234-9267.

1 SALES REPRESENTATIVE (THS 0026)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Workers compensation & medical expenses company provided. Contact: Kumanomi Island Co., Ltd. @233-6298.

1 WAITRESS/WAITER (THS 0027)
Salary:\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Workers compensation & medical expenses company provided. Contact: Kumanomi Island Co., Ltd. @233-6298.

1 GENERAL MANAGER (THS 0028)
Salary:\$2,000.00/monthly. Benefits: Workers compensation & medical expenses company provided. Contact: Treasures Inc. @233-3701.

1 ACCOUNTANT (THS 0029)
Salary:\$4.05-\$7.75/hour. Benefits: \$10.00-\$50.00/gas allowance; workers compensation & medical insurance company provided. Contact: H.I.S. Saipan Inc. @234-7053.

CLASSIFIEDS RATES AND POLICIES

Saipan Tribune's Classifieds Section gives you the right exposure without hurting your pockets. Stretch your dollar and get results.

CLASSIFIED ADS

Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 7-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as \$25 per 3 liner ad for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of below packages that fits your budget.

ADS (7DAYS)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	\$25
• 5-Liner	\$35
• 3-Liner with picture	\$45
• 5-Liner with picture	\$55

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

All job vacancy announcements will be published for two issues in each of two successive weeks.

1st position	\$13.00
2nd position	\$5.00
Succeeding positions	\$2.00

These rates apply to all job vacancy announcements in Saipan that include corresponding benefits and which positions are all under the same company name and dba.

Newspaper clippings are also available for \$.25 per copy.

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Job Vacancy Announcements

Monday Through Friday Issues: All ads placed before 12 noon will come out the next publication date.

Saturday And Sunday Issues:
- Saipan Tribune: All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on either Sunday or Monday issues.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

Job Vacancy Announcements

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the Saipan Tribune are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.



WHATZIT?

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

9ALL5

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Find today's solution in this section

JOB OPPORTUNITIES



1 SCUBA DIVING INSTRUCTOR (THS 0030)
Salary: \$3.05-\$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical expense & workers compensation employer provided. Contact: Wondersea Saipan Inc. @233-7011.

1 MANAGER, COMPUTER & INFORMATION SYSTEM (SM 0025)
Salary: \$1,972.00-\$2,700.00/monthly. Benefits: Medical as provided by law & workmen's compensation. Contact: L&T Group of Companies Ltd. @236-2400/2457.

1 ACCOUNTANT (SM 0026)
Salary: \$3.55-\$5.50/hour. Benefits: Medical as provided by law & workmen's compensation. Contact: L&T Group of Companies Ltd. @236-2400/2457.

1 HOUSEWORKER (SM 0027)
Salary: \$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged food;

workers compensation & medical. Contact: Zheng Biao @483-1188.

2 ARCADE ATTENDANT (SM 0028)
Salary: \$3.55-\$4.00/hour. Benefits: Workers compensation insurance & medical reimbursable. Contact: Jimin Enterprises, Inc. dba Grand Poker/Royal Casino @233-3378.

1 BAKER (SM 0029)
Salary: \$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workers compensation. Contact: Winchell's Inc. dba Winchell's Donut House @235-0247.

1 COUNTER ATTENDANT (SM 0030)
Salary: \$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workers compensation. Contact: Winchell's Inc. dba Winchell's Donut House @234-5566.

1 COMPUTER PROGRAMMER (SM 0031)
Salary: \$6.20/hour. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; medical expense & worker

compensation. Contact: Yaong Corporation @235-8727.

1 SALES SUPERVISOR (SM 0032)
Salary: \$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; medical expense & worker compensation. Contact: Yaong Corporation @235-8727.

1 FOUNTAIN SERVER (SM 0033)
Salary: \$3.55-\$4.00/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; employee provided food; medical & workmen's compensation as provided by employer. Contact: John Hirsh dba Big Dipper Ice Cream Factory @233-9352.

1 AUTO MECHANIC (SM 0034)
Salary: \$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arrange housing; self arrange food; medical & workers compensation. Contact: Mantrade Company Inc. @235-0695/898-5713.

1 PLUMBER (SM 0035)
Salary: \$3.55-\$5.60/hour. Benefits: Free housing; self provide food;

medical & workmen's compensation. Contact: Vestcor Real Estate, Ltd. @322-3797.

1 MAINTENANCE BLDG. REPAIRER (SM 0036)
Salary: \$3.55-\$4.70/hour. Benefits: Free housing; self provide food; medical & workmen's compensation. Contact: Vestcor Real Estate, Ltd. @322-3797.

1 ELECTRICAL ENGINEER (SM 0037)
Salary: \$800.00-\$1,995.00/monthly. Benefits: Free housing; self provide food; medical & workmen's compensation. Contact: Vestcor Real Estate, Ltd. @322-3797.

1 MASON (SM 0038)
Salary: \$3.55-\$4.05/hour. Benefits: Medical & workman compensation provided. Contact: Guangdong Dev. Co., Ltd. @288-2288.

1 SALES MANAGER (SM 0039)
Salary: \$3.50-\$4.75/hour. Benefits: Medical & workman compensation provided. Contact: Guangdong Dev. Co., Ltd. @288-2288.

SPORTS

Mets use rubber bands to teach their pitchers



PORT ST. LUCIE, Fla. (AP)—

Johan Santana stepped on the mound for his bullpen session, peered in at the catcher and noticed something new.

There was a thin rubber band stretched across home plate, representing the bottom of the strike zone.

Aim for that rubber band, the New York Mets instruct their pitchers—from Cy Young Award winners to low-level prospects. That's your visual guide.

"It's very different. I've never seen anything like it before," said Santana, the left-handed ace who was acquired from Minnesota last month. "It helps you focus on keeping the ball down."

The Mets cite statistical research that shows big league batters hit .220 against pitches at the bottom of the strike zone, so they want all their hurlers constantly working to keep the ball down.

Fastballs, curves, changeups, doesn't matter. Aim low, win big.

That starts in spring training with the rubber bands, fastened around poles or stakes that are planted in each batter's box in the bullpens at Tradition Field. The rubber bands are set at knee-level for an imaginary hitter and are thin enough that the ball's flight isn't altered before it hits the catcher's mitt.

In this elaborate era of computer scouting and video evaluation, the Mets still use a tried-and-tested teaching tool that you can buy at any corner drug store.

"High-tech—rubber bands," bullpen coach Guy

Conti said with a smile.

The Mets certainly didn't invent this method of tutoring pitchers. The 65-year-old Conti, who has been coaching in pro ball for 25 years, said he first saw the Los Angeles Dodgers setting up strings at the plate to school their pitchers about 1963.

Sandy Koufax, Don Drysdale—not bad.

The Mets began using the rubber bands when pitching coach Rick Peterson arrived from the Oakland Athletics before the 2004 season.

Peterson, who also mentioned that the Dodgers have done this for years, employed the rubber bands to help train Tim Hudson, Barry Zito and Mark Mulder when they were at their best as Oakland's Big Three. The A's led the AL in ERA twice under Peterson, in 2002 and 2003.

Still, the tactic seems to be fairly uncommon.

Mets right-hander Nelson Figueroa, who has pitched in six major league organizations plus Taiwan, Mexico, the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico, said the only other place he saw it was with the Arizona Diamondbacks nearly a decade ago.

"I remember the catchers used to flinch all the time," he said. "I like it. You start playing a game with it. You start seeing how many times you can hit it. If your breaking ball drops below the string, you know that's an out pitch."

The next day, Figueroa said he snapped a rubber band on a near-perfect pitch during his bullpen session.

"With a changeup," he said, joking. "Ask Peterson."

Papelbon, 17 others reach agreements

FORT MYERS, Fla. (AP)—The Boston Red Sox and closer Jonathan Papelbon agreed Thursday to a \$775,000, one-year contract, nearly doubling his salary.

Papelbon was among 18 Red Sox players who agreed to one-year deals, putting Boston's entire 40-man major league roster under contract.

Papelbon earned \$425,550 last season, when he had 37 saves in 40 opportunities and a 1.85 ERA, then saved three of the four World Series games against Colorado. He hoped to get a multiyear deal but had no leverage. He said he wanted to set a salary standard for future outstanding closers.

"I feel a certain obligation not only to myself and my family to make the money that I deserve but for the game of baseball," he said Tuesday. "Mariano Rivera has been doing it for the past 10 years and with me coming up behind him I feel a certain obligation to do the same."

The 27-year-old will be

eligible for arbitration after the season.

Among the other players who agreed to contracts were AL Rookie of the Year Dustin Pedroia, center fielder Jacoby Ellsbury (\$406,000 in majors, \$62,500 in minors) and pitcher Jon Lester. In Boston's World Series sweep, Pedroia drove in four runs, Ellsbury hit a team best .438 and Lester pitched 5 2-3 scoreless innings in the fourth game.

Clay Buchholz, who pitched a no-hitter in his second major league game last Sept. 1, agreed to a one-year deal worth \$396,000 in the majors and \$62,500 in the minors.

The other agreements were reached with pitchers David Aardsma, Craig Breslow, Bryan Corey, Manny Delcarmen, Devern Hansack, Kyle Jackson, Edgar Martinez, and David Pauley; catchers Dusty Brown and George Kottaras; infielders Chris Carter and Argenis Diaz, and outfielder and Brandon Moss.

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Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune
CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER



Favre rules out return to football



GREEN BAY, Wis. (AP)—Sitting by himself on an airplane ride up to Green Bay on Thursday morning, Brett Favre struggled to find a sincere and graceful way to say he was finished with football.

In the end, his tears told the story.

"It's been a great career for me, and it's over," Favre said, his voice cracking with emotion during a news conference at Lambeau Field two days after he announced his retirement. "As hard as that is for me to say, it's over."

Wearing an untucked collared shirt, blue jeans and several days' worth of stubble, Favre said he was convinced he could still play on Sundays, but had lost his passion to practice and prepare the way he would need to lead the Packers to another Super Bowl.

Given that fact, he could draw only one conclusion: It was time to hang up his helmet.

"I have way too much pride," Favre said. "I expect a lot out of myself. And if I cannot do those things 100 percent, then I can't play."

After a farewell news conference that lasted just over an hour, Favre put his arm around his tearful wife, Deanna, and left the stage—presumably for good.

He takes with him a Super Bowl victory, virtually every quarterback record worth having and the widespread admiration of his peers and fans.

The 38-year-old Favre also leaves with graying hair and a deliberate gait—signs that the years were quietly taking a toll on the man who was celebrated for playing a serious and precise game with the carefree joy of a little boy.

He cried Thursday as he discussed his decision.

"I promised I wouldn't get emotional," he said. But as the tears flowed, he added, "I've watched hundreds of players retire and you wonder what that would be like. You think you're prepared..."

Favre thanked the Green Bay Packers for letting him play.

"I hope that with every penny they've spent on me, they know it was money well spent," he said. "It wasn't about the money or fame or records. I hear people talk about your accomplishments and things. It was never my accomplishments, it was our accomplishments."

Favre is the NFL's only three-time MVP, and leads the league with 442 touchdown passes, 61,655 yards passing and 160 career victories. He started 253 consecutive regular-season games, more than any other quarterback in history.

Favre also holds the more dubious mark of 288 interceptions—an indication of the wild streak that only made him more human to the fans who adored him.

The same was true of Favre's highly publicized struggles with

an addiction to prescription painkillers, his support of his wife through a battle with breast cancer, and a memorable Monday night game against Oakland after he lost his father.

Favre's exit comes after a remarkable 2007 season, but his final pass was one to forget: An interception in overtime of the NFC championship game, a mistake that set up the New York Giants' field goal that sent the Packers home instead of to the Super Bowl.

Most folks figured Favre couldn't exit that way, especially when he had at least one more good year left in him.

But barring a change of heart in the upcoming weeks, months or years, the final chapter in his storied football career began Monday night.

Favre called Packers coach Mike McCarthy and told him he planned to retire, then finalized his decision in a conversation with Packers general manager Ted Thompson on Tuesday morning.

But until the news conference, Favre hadn't explained his decision to his fans. He said Thursday there was nothing left to prove.

"I'm going out on top," he said. "Believe me, I could care less what other people think. It's what I think, and I'm going out on top."

Favre's retirement came as a surprise to Packers executives, coaches and teammates, virtually all of whom expected him to return. And it was a shock to fans who sat patiently, year after year, while Favre flirted openly with retirement—because, of course, he never really meant it.

To a generation of fans who watched Favre start every game since taking over as the Packers' starting quarterback during the 1992 season, it didn't make sense. He wouldn't just decide he was too tired to play and walk away.

Would he?

Recent comments by Favre's agent, Bus Cook, stirred suspicions about the "real" reason Favre was retiring.

Had the Packers' front office not done enough to talk him into coming back?

Was Favre's retirement a knee-jerk reaction to the fact that wide receiver Randy Moss, a player Favre lobbied the Packers to sign a year ago, had resigned with the New England Patriots without an apparent effort from the Packers?

Favre's comments Thursday indicated the decision was much simpler.

"I did it, but it got hard," he said. "I don't think it would get easier next year or the following year. It hasn't up until this point. It's only gotten tougher and something told me 'You know it's gotten too hard for you.' I could probably come back and do it. Suck it up. But what kind of a toll would that take on me, my family or my teammates? At some point it would affect one



of those if not all of them. Maybe it has already. I don't know."

Some who know Favre have doubts that he will be able to spend Sundays on the couch when he still has the ability to play.

Favre said Thursday he had no definite plans for the future and did not know whether he would be involved in football or with the Packers, but ruled out a return to the field.

"I don't even want to think about next year," he said. "Will I watch games? I'm sure I will. Will I be involved? I always made the joke I'd be here for an honorary coin toss. Well, that time may come, so I may be back for something like that. But as far as giving advice, I don't think that will happen."

Tears roll down the face of Green Bay Packers quarterback Brett Favre as he cries during a press conference announcing that he was officially retiring from football on Thursday, March 6, 2008, at Lambeau Field in Green Bay, Wis.

AP

NFL BRIEFS

Suggs files grievance

OWINGS MILLS, Md. (AP)—Terrell Suggs filed a grievance against the Baltimore Ravens over whether he should be classified as a defensive end or a linebacker, a dispute in which \$814,000 is at stake. Suggs wants to receive the \$8.879 million one-year salary for the defensive end franchise tag designation. The Ravens assigned Suggs the \$8.065 million franchise tag for linebackers, the average of the top five linebackers' salaries in the NFL. An arbitration hearing before an NFL special master to resolve the issue hasn't been scheduled. Suggs contends he played more than 50 percent of his snaps at defensive end last year. When the Ravens used the tag on Suggs on Feb. 19, general manager Ozzie Newsome countered that argument. "Well, in our defense, Terrell has always been an outside linebacker, was drafted as an outside linebacker and that's why he

was designated as such," Newsome said. Newsome added that Suggs was twice voted to the Pro Bowl as a linebacker and plays linebacker in the team's base defense. The Ravens still want to sign Suggs to a long-term contract extension, but negotiations are on hold until his franchise designation is determined by an arbitrator. Suggs' agent, Gary Wichard, didn't return telephone calls and e-mails.

Broncos sign LB Boss Bailey

ENGLEWOOD, Colo. (AP)—The Denver Broncos on Thursday signed free agent linebacker Boss Bailey, the younger brother of perennial Pro Bowl cornerback Champ Bailey. Boss Bailey spent his first five seasons in Detroit, after being selected in the second round of the 2003 draft. He had a standout career at the University of Georgia, where he followed his older brother as an all-conference selection. The

28-year-old linebacker has appeared in 58 games, including 51 starts, and has made 258 tackles, seven sacks and two interceptions. Last season, he had a career-best 3 1/2 sacks and 47 tackles in 15 games.

Eagles cut Spikes

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—The Philadelphia Eagles released two-time Pro Bowl linebacker Takeo Spikes on Thursday. The 10-year veteran played one season in Philadelphia and finished second on the team with 139 tackles. Spikes missed the final two games last season after having shoulder surgery. Spikes is the second high-profile player cut by the Eagles in a week. Defensive end Jevon Kearse was let go last Thursday after playing four seasons in Philadelphia. The Eagles signed All-Pro cornerback Asante Samuel and defensive end Chris Clemons in the first two days of the NFL's free-agency period.

Pro golfer faces charges in hawk killing



ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)—PGA Tour player Tripp Isenhour faces charges for hitting a hawk with a golf shot because it was making noise as he videotaped a TV show.

Isenhour was with a film crew for "Shoot Like A Pro" on Dec. 12 at the Grand Cypress Golf course. The 39-year-old player, whose real name is John Henry Isenhour III, was charged Wednesday with cruelty to animals and killing a migratory bird. The charges carry a maximum penalty of 14 months in jail and \$1,500 in fines.

Isenhour apologized in a statement released Thursday and said he was only trying to scare the hawk away.

According to court documents, Isenhour got upset when a red-shouldered hawk began making noise, forcing another

take. He began hitting balls at the bird, then 300 yards away, but gave up. Isenhour started again when the hawk moved within about 75 yards, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission officer Brian Baine indicated in a report.

Isenhour allegedly said, "I'll get him now," and aimed for the hawk.

"About the sixth ball came very near the bird's head, and (Isenhour) was very excited that it was so close," Baine wrote.

A few shots later, witnesses said he hit the hawk. The bird, protected as a migratory species, fell to the ground bleeding from both nostrils.

"As soon as this happened, I was mortified and extremely upset and continue to be upset," Isenhour said in a statement issued through his management company, SFX Golf. "I want to let everyone know there was

neither any malice nor deliberate intent whatsoever to hit or harm the hawk. I was trying to simply scare it into flying away."

Isenhour said his family has adopted three cats from a local shelter.

"I am an animal lover," he said. "We ask that everyone accept my sincerest apology, and please be respectful of my family's privacy."

Humane Society executive vice president Michael Markarian said Isenhour should face charges.

"Americans have no tolerance for cruelty to animals. Such a petty, mean spirited act against a wild bird is inexcusable and prosecutors are right to hold Isenhour accountable to the law," he said in a statement released Thursday.

Isenhour has spent two full years on the PGA Tour, both times failing to keep his card. He has won four times on the

Nationwide Tour, including twice in 2006.

"He just kept saying how he didn't think he could have hit it, which I think is a stupid thing for a PGA Tour golfer to say," said Jethro Senger, a sound engineer at the shoot. "He can put a ball in a hole from hundreds of yards away, and here he is hitting line drives at something that's, I don't know, a couple hundred feet away?"

Senger said it was "basically like a joke to (Isenhour)." He said no one in the roughly 15-person crew intervened, and many later regretted it.

"It was one of those cases where there's some trepidation on whether or not they should speak up and do something," Senger said.

Senger said the killing was not captured on video. The bird was buried at the golf course and later dug up by Florida investigators.

McGrady, Rockets make it 17 in a row

DALLAS (AP)—Tracy McGrady had 31 points and nine assists and Rafer Alston added a season-high 24 points, helping the Houston Rockets push their franchise-best winning streak to 17 games with a 113-98 victory over the Dirk Nowitzki-less Dallas Mavericks on Thursday night.

Houston's streak is tied for seventh-best in NBA history. The Rockets will try moving into a tie for fourth Saturday night at home against New Orleans, the next team they're trying to catch for a top-tier seed in the Western Conference. Houston already has gone from 24-20 to 41-20; the Hornets are 41-19.

The surprising part of the Rockets' sustained run is that the last five wins have come since Yao Ming broke his left foot, ending his season.

"When we lost Yao, people thought we wouldn't make (the playoffs)," Houston coach Rick Adelman said before the game. "But we're showing we still can compete."

McGrady and Alston helped the Rockets break the game open in the third quarter.

After consecutive long jumpers by Jason Kidd tied it at 55 early in the period, Houston answered with a 13-3 run. The Rockets had a big lead going into the fourth quarter, then McGrady made it 19 with an emphatic dunk off a pass from Alston thrown up from just inside halfcourt. A timeout followed, and fans started streaming out with 8:42 left.

Josh Howard scored 21 points and Jason Terry had 17 for Dallas, which lost its third straight and fourth in five games. The Mavs also had won 12 straight at home—but this time they were without Nowitzki. The reigning MVP was serving a one-game suspension for a hard foul on Utah's Andrei Kirilenko.

Dallas' offense was out of whack without Nowitzki, and his team-best 23.6 points and 8.7 rebounds. His absence was especially obvious during the third-quarter meltdown, when the Mavericks



Houston Rockets guard Tracy McGrady, center, drives to the basket between Dallas Mavericks forward Devean George, left, and center Erick Dampier during the first half of an NBA basketball game, Thursday, March 6, 2008, in Dallas.

kept looking for someone to get the ball to but instead kept turning it over. Dallas had seven turnovers in the period, lead-

ing to 12 points for Houston.

The Rockets won by sharing the ball and by protecting it. As of midway

Nowitzki suspended 1 game for hard foul

DALLAS (AP)—Dirk Nowitzki was suspended without pay for one game by the NBA on Wednesday for his hard foul on Utah's Andrei Kirilenko.

Nowitzki will miss the Dallas Mavericks' next game, at home Thursday night against the divisional rival Houston Rockets, who recently passed them in the tight Western Conference standings.

Nowitzki received a flagrant-1 when he hit Kirilenko midway

through the first quarter of a 116-110 loss to Utah on Monday. However, the league reviewed the play and decided to upgrade it to a flagrant-2. Had it been ruled a flagrant-2 at the time he would've been ejected.

Kirilenko injured his right hip in the fall and stayed down for several minutes before getting up gingerly. He made both foul shots before being helped to the locker room. He was taken for X-rays, which showed no break.

through the fourth quarter, when victory was secure, Houston had 22 assists and four turnovers.

Carl Landry scored 17 points, including 12 in the second quarter, and Luis Scola added 12 points and nine rebounds for Houston.

Jerry Stackhouse was the only other double-digit scorer for Dallas with 11. Kidd had seven points, six assists and six rebounds. Brandon Bass, who started in Nowitzki's place, had seven points.

Houston made its first five shots, then its first six in the second quarter. Dallas went through a 2-of-12 drought and other poor stretches, yet managed to go into halftime trailing only 52-50. The Mavericks were almost giddy on their way to the locker room because of the score and because Devean George closed the half by making a high-arching 3-pointer with 0.8 seconds left.

Dallas fell to 4-5 since Kidd arrived. The only consolation is that all the losses were to teams ahead of the Mavs in the Western Conference. Up next for the Mavs: Five straight games against teams with losing records. The first four are at home, then they go to Miami to face the club with the league's worst record.

Bulls 107, Cavaliers 96

At Chicago, Ben Gordon and Luol Deng scored 23 points apiece, and Chicago overcame 39 points from LeBron James to beat Cleveland.

The Bulls went on a 17-point run early in the third quarter to grab a 66-53 lead, and Gordon scored nine straight during a 51-second burst late in the period to make it a 17-point game. That was enough to offset another outstanding effort by James.

The Cavaliers got 15 points from Devin Brown and 14 from Wally Szczerbiak.

Spurs 108, Pacers 97

At San Antonio, Manu Ginobili scored 28 points to help San Antonio win its 11th straight, keeping the defending NBA champions atop the tight Western Conference.

Tony Parker added 19 points in the game, which wasn't close after halftime and saw Spurs coach Gregg Popovich get ejected in the second quarter. Tim Duncan had 12 rebounds and six points on 3-of-11 shooting.

Danny Granger led Indiana, which has lost two straight, with 22 points. Mike Dunleavy and Troy Murphy each added 13 points.

PALM HARBOR, Fla. (AP)—Bart Bryant got his bad shots out of the way early and birdied his last two holes Thursday for a 6-under 65, giving him a one-shot lead among early starters who were lucky to beat the rain in the PODS Championship.

Bryant was thrilled to twice escape with pars through six holes, and he wasn't paying that much attention to his card until he realized he was 4 under. Then came birdies on two of the toughest holes at Innisbrook, including a 15-foot putt on the 18th, and he found himself atop the leaderboard.

"I felt like I got my bad stuff out of the way and I was still even par," Bryant said. "I think that gave me a little confidence."

Ernie Els, coming off a victory in the Honda Classic that ended an 0-for-47 drought on the PGA Tour, was part of the afternoon wave that did not finish the first round because of a 2 1/2-hour storm delay.

Els made two straight bogeys when he returned to the course, and finished his day with a birdie at No. 11 to return to even par.

Two-time U.S. Open champion Lee Janzen, who has not had full status on

Bryant holds lead at PODS Championship



the PGA Tour since 2006, made good use of his sponsor's exemption with five birdies that left him one stroke behind with three holes remaining.

John Daly, another player without a card but no shortage of exemptions, was 3 over through 10 holes and still got the biggest buzz. After ducking into a Hooters hospitality tent during the rain delay, he emerged with Tampa Bay Buccaneers coach Jon Gruden as his caddie for the rest of the afternoon. It didn't help much, as Daly three-putted from the front of the 18th green for another bogey.

The first round was scheduled to resume at 7:30 a.m. Friday. It was the first time rain has halted play on the PGA Tour this year.

Rain earlier in the week took some of the bite out of the Copperhead Course at Innisbrook, regarded as one of the toughest tour tracks in Florida, and rarely has it played this easy.

Kenny Perry hobbled around on a hip that felt like it was shooting volts

down his leg, but he managed seven birdies in a round of 66, tied with Jeff Maggert and Stewart Cink.

Cink was playing for the first time since losing to Tiger Woods at the Accenture Match Play Championship, and while he suffered the worst beating in the 10-year history of the final match (8 and 7), he figured this was a continuation of good play.

"I had a lot of confidence after Match Play," Cink said. "Even losing the last match, I was happy to be in the last match."

Carl Pettersson, who won at Innisbrook in 2005, and Jonathan Byrd were among those at 67. Jerry Kelly was 4 under through four holes when play was stopped by the storms. When play resumed he missed a good chance at a fifth straight birdie, then dropped a shot on the 16th.

Kelly was 3 under through 11 holes.

Perhaps it is not surprising that so many guys in their 40s—Bryant, Maggert, Perry, Tom Pernice Jr.—were atop the leaderboard. This is a course that requires more brain than brawn, and expe-

rience tends to come in handy.

Even the guys with power find themselves throttling back.

"You can't hit too many shots without putting thought into them," Byrd said.

The good news for Bryant is that he's hitting shots without feeling too much pain. It seems every time he recovers from one surgery, another body part starts hurting, which was the case last year.

Bryant said his right hip was in such bad shape that he took two months off during the summer. When he returned, his right elbow was acting up again, and he couldn't practice the last three months of the season.

"No practice, just playing," the 45-year-old said. "This year, I've been able to start hitting balls. My health has been good."

The results are slowly coming along. It was only three years ago that Bryant's career turned the corner with victories in the Memorial and the Tour Championship, the latter a six-shot victory over Woods.

Last week at the Honda Classic, he

was among the leaders on Friday until taking a quadruple-bogey on the sixth hole that sent him back to the pack. Those big numbers can happen at PGA National, and Bryant wasn't too bothered.

"It showed my game is in the kind of shape that I can get up there at the top," he said.

Perry, meanwhile, started feeling a sting down his leg only two days ago, which doesn't affect his swing, only getting around. He is 47 and desperate to win, figuring that will get the attention of Ryder Cup captain Paul Azinger.

The Ryder Cup will be held at Valhalla in Perry's home state of Kentucky.

"I just haven't had that consistency for four rounds," Perry said. "I need a win badly."

No one needs to win more than Janzen, whose last victory was his second U.S. Open title at The Olympic Club in 1998, has not finished inside the top 125 on the money list the last three years.

He has been playing well enough at home that he felt overly confident going to Mexico two weeks ago. Then he missed the cut.

"The good news is I didn't leave there totally dejected," Janzen said.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
x-Boston	47	12	.797	—
Toronto	33	27	.550	14 1/2
Philadelphia	28	33	.459	20
New Jersey	26	35	.426	22
New York	18	43	.295	30

Southeast Division

Orlando	40	23	.635	—
Washington	29	31	.483	9 1/2
Atlanta	24	35	.407	14
Charlotte	22	39	.361	17
Miami	11	47	.190	26 1/2

Central Division

Detroit	44	17	.721	—
Cleveland	35	27	.565	9 1/2
Chicago	25	36	.410	19
Indiana	24	38	.387	20 1/2
Milwaukee	23	38	.377	21

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

San Antonio	43	17	.717	—
New Orleans	41	19	.683	2
Houston	41	20	.672	2 1/2
Dallas	39	23	.629	5
Memphis	15	46	.246	28 1/2

Northwest Division

Utah	40	22	.645	—
Denver	36	24	.600	3
Portland	31	30	.508	8 1/2
Seattle	16	45	.262	23 1/2
Minnesota	12	48	.200	27

Pacific Division

L.A. Lakers	43	18	.705	—
Phoenix	40	21	.656	3
Golden State	37	23	.617	5 1/2
Sacramento	27	34	.443	16
L.A. Clippers	20	39	.339	22

x-clinched playoff spot

Yesterday's Games

Chicago 107, Cleveland 96
San Antonio 108, Indiana 97
Houston 113, Dallas 98

PODS CHAMPIONSHIP SCORES

PALM HARBOR, Florida (AP)—Incomplete scores Thursday from the first round of the \$5.3 million (£3.46 million) PODS Championship being played on the Innisbrook Resort and Golf Club's 7,340-yard, par-71 (36-35)

FIRST ROUND

Bart Bryant	34-31	65
Kenny Perry	34-32	66
Jeff Maggert	32-34	66
Stewart Cink	35-31	66
Tom Pernice, Jr.	33-34	67
Jonathan Byrd	36-31	67
Carl Pettersson	33-34	67
Nick Watney	34-34	68
D.J. Trahan	35-33	68
Brian Bateman	35-33	68
Jeff Overton	35-33	68
Sean O'Hair	33-36	69
Brandt Snedeker	37-32	69
Fred Couples	36-33	69
Ted Purdy	36-33	69
Peter Lonard	35-34	69
Billy Andrade	34-35	69
Ken Duke	37-33	70
Justin Rose	36-34	70
Tag Ridings	35-35	70
Retief Goosen	36-34	70
George McNeill	36-34	70
Robert Allenby	36-34	70
Troy Matteson	33-37	70
Todd Hamilton	33-37	70
Daniel Chopra	37-33	70
Marc Turnesa	38-32	70
Brian Davis	36-34	70
Bill Haas	35-35	70
Ryan Moore	36-34	70
Steve Marino	33-37	70
Derek Lamely	37-33	70
Chez Reavie	35-35	70
Craig Barlow	36-35	71
Shane Bertsch	36-35	71
Charles Warren	36-35	71
J.J. Henry	37-34	71
Chad Campbell	37-34	71
Stephen Ames	35-36	71
Scott Verplank	37-34	71
Dean Wilson	37-34	71
Cameron Beckman	36-35	71
Bob Estes	38-33	71
J.P. Hayes	37-34	71
James Driscoll	35-36	71
Kenneth Ferrie	35-36	71
Rocco Mediate	37-35	72
Nick O'Hern	36-36	72
Stephen Leaney	36-36	72
Briny Baird	37-35	72
Ryuji Imada	38-34	72
Kevin Stadler	39-33	72

Mark Wilson	35-37	72
Joe Durant	35-37	72
Trevor Immelman	34-38	72
David Duval	37-35	72
Tommy Armour III	36-36	72
Bubba Watson	37-35	72
Mathias Gronberg	39-33	72
Steve Elkington	39-34	73
Brian Gay	35-38	73
Michael Allen	36-37	73
Jose Coceres	37-37	74
Will MacKenzie	38-36	74
J.B. Holmes	39-35	74
Marco Dawson	37-37	74
Jeff Quinney	38-37	75
John Rollins	38-37	75
Parker McLachlin	39-36	75
Paul Azinger	40-39	79
Patrick Olive	44-40	84

Did Not Finish

Lee Janzen
John Senden
Stuart Appleby
Nicholas Thompson
Billy Mayfair
Alex Cejka
Jason Gore
Steve Stricker
Jerry Kelly
Roland Thatcher
Rich Beem
Jay Williamson
Ryan Armour
Robert Garrigus
Ben Crane
Charley Hoffman
Rod Pampling
Shigeki Maruyama
Paul Casey
Patrick Sheehan
Frank Lickliter II
Nick Flanagan
Michael Letzig
Jon Mills
Charlie Wi
Cliff Kresge
Kevin Streelman
Paul Goydos
Mark Calcavecchia
Olin Browne
Charles Howell III
Heath Slocum
Steve Lowery
Vaughn Taylor
Nathan Green
Matt Jones
Tim Petrovic
Lucas Glover
Steve Flesch
Ernie Els
Geoff Ogilvy
David Toms
Johnson Wagner
Jin Park
Dustin Johnson
Jason Day
Bo Van Pelt
Pat Perez
Brett Quigley
Kevin Sutherland
Hunter Mahan
Chris DiMarco
Mathew Goggin
John Huston
Richard Johnson
Brett Rumford
Santiago Cavanagh
Shaun Micheel
Corey Pavin
Robert Gamez
John Mallingier
Brad Adamonis
Eric Axley
Boo Weekley
Davis Love III
Jesper Parnevik
John Daly
Jim Renner
Chris Stroud
Tim Herron
Michael Bradley
Mark Hensby

Leaderboard

	SCORE	THRU
1. Bart Bryant	-6	F
2. Kenny Perry	-5	F
2. Jeff Maggert	-5	F
2. Stewart Cink	-5	F
2. Lee Janzen	-5	15
6. Tom Pernice, Jr.	-4	F
6. Jonathan Byrd	-4	F
6. Carl Pettersson	-4	F
6. John Senden	-4	14
6. Stuart Appleby	-4	11
6. Nicholas Thompson	-4	9
12. Nick Watney	-3	F
12. D.J. Trahan	-3	F
12. Brian Bateman	-3	F
12. Jeff Overton	-3	F
12. Billy Mayfair	-3	16
12. Alex Cejka	-3	16
12. Jason Gore	-3	15
12. Steve Stricker	-3	12
12. Jerry Kelly	-3	11
12. Roland Thatcher	-3	9

By The Associated Press

Trench Tech finds new home

By JON PEREZ

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REPORTER

The Trench Tech Purebred Saipan Gym finally found a permanent home that they can call their own as they will be relocating to Afetna Square in San Antonio.

Trench Tech co-instructor and fight coordinator Cuki Alvarez, who is the brains behind the Trench Warz and Rites of Passage mixed martial arts series, said they decided to move the gym to accommodate the growing MMA community.

"This is to inform all friends, acquaintances, members, fans, valued customers, and the entire Trench Tech family that by April 15, [the] Trench Tech [gym] will be moving to its new home in

Afetna's Square located behind the Immigration Building in San Antonio," Alvarez said.

From Trench Tech's current location behind Moylan's Insurance in Garapan, the gym will move to Afetna Square or Babauta estate, which is located behind the Sa-

blan Building in San Antonio. The new building, which is an old garment factory warehouse, is a 15,708-square-foot facility that is capable of accommodating between 1,500 to 2,000 fight fans.

Trench Tech's new gym is an air-conditioned facility with ample parking space that can accommodate more than 100 cars. "[The] place is huge and we can able to host events there

for the duration of our lease," said Alvarez.

Trench Tech will follow the same regular business hours for training from 5pm to 8pm from Mondays to Saturdays. They are still selling the Trench Tech clothing line and other gears.

They are also preparing to offer more MMA classes like their planned after-school program for teenagers from 3pm to 5pm and women's classes. Alvarez said they would inform everyone of future developments.

"Trench Tech is committed in bringing top caliber events to Saipan. [We] will strive and work diligently with our sponsors to honor our word," Alvar-



Alvarez

ez said. "We are happy and confident about the move and with everyone's support, [we] will continue the journey to improve our MMA facility and shows."

For more information, call Alvarez at 483-4MMA or 483-4662.

GCA

From Page 28

the second half and bottled up Li all throughout and at times double- or triple-teamed him that forced him to take hurried shots or pass the ball.

With the Knights' main man hounded and had limited touches of the ball, Mt. Carmel coach Hoe Sanchez ran out of scoring options while GCA had a reliable supporting crew.

Dae Min Jeon supported Vertudez with 10 points, while Max

Camacho, Jamin Dela Cruz, and Michael Moran Jr. combined for 24 points.

Li had a game-high 37 points and was fouled most of the time, but only converted 10 of his 20 free throws. Reynald Cabaltica was the next highest scorer for the Knights with nine markers.

In the first game, SIS used its height advantage to the hilt to cruise to a 37-23 decision against GCA in the girls division.

Zoe Jewell scored 14 points, while Amber Roberts and Serena Patillo combined for nine more

for SIS, which even blanked GCA in the first quarter.

Klie O'Connor paced GCA with nine points, while Ricci Pamintuan added seven more. Antonette Labausa and Agatha Cyril Marasigan had four and two points to round up the scoring.

First Game (Girls)

Saipan International School 37 – Jewell 14, Roberts 6, Patillo 5, Hudkins 4, Thompson 4, Camacho 2, Schultz 2.

Grace Christian Academy 23 – O'Connor 9, Pamintuan 7,

Labausa 4, Marasigan 2.

Scoring by quarters: 3-0, 14-8, 23-14, 37-23.

Referees: Eric Artillaga and Jovie Omar

Second Game (Boys)

Grace Christian Academy 62 – Vertudez 22, Jeon 10, Camacho 9, Dela Cruz 8, Moran 7, Salas 3, Mamaril 3.

Mt. Carmel School 54 – Li 37, Cabaltica 9, Baka 4, Igitol 2.

Scoring by quarters: 6-8, 25-24, 46-38, 62-54.

Referees: Eric Artillaga and Jovie Omar

SWIMMERS

From Page 28

Rezne Wong of swimming and Ji Hoon Heo of tennis as February Male Athlete of the Month; Sarah Johnson of swimming as February Female Athlete of the Month; Rafael Jones of tennis as February Male Student Athlete of the Month; and Abigail Martinsen of swimming as February Female Athlete of the Month.

Wong, wearing the colors of Swimming Center Tsunami Saipan, had a swim to remember during the 3rd Annual Heptathlon Swim Meet held last Feb. 1 at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool in Marpi.

That was when he broke the CNMI 100m breaststroke re-

cord set by Dean Palacios when he swam the event in 1:12.19. The previous best mark was 1:12.21 and set by Palacios in 2003. Wong went on to top the boys' 15-and-over age group of the meet with his 655 points.

Heo, for his part, won his second straight Athlete of the Month citation after winning the men's singles finals of the 2008 Coconut Classic last Feb. 18 at American Memorial Park tennis courts.

The 15-year-old Marianas High School standout rallied back from three games down to beat former mentor Jeff Race, 9-7.

Race actually turned back the hands of time when he led 6-3 and only needed three more games to wrap up the contest and get back at Heo, who beat him in the men's singles finals

of the DFS Micronesia tennis tournament last year at Pacific Islands Club tennis courts.

But Heo turned it up a notch in the final seven games to thwart Race's upset hopes and win the 2008 Coconut Classic's premier event.

Johnson, meanwhile, won the 3rd Annual Meek and Mighty 5,000m Ocean Swim last Feb. 3. In addition to that, the 15-year-old Saipan International School student won three medals (a gold and two silvers) in the Far North Queensland Championships.

She also swam six lifetime bests, barely missing the CNMI record in the 400m freestyle; and finished second in high points at the 3rd Annual Saipan Swim Club Heptathlon

Virtual Meet held last Feb. 1 and 2 with 520 points.

Male Student Athlete of the Month Jones, for his part, earned the plum after topping a strong 24-player field in the boys 13-and-under division of the 2008 Coconut Classic.

In winning the age group, Jones defeated the two most recent champions—Jake Lee and Christian Miller.

Last but definitely not the least, Martinsen won the 3rd Annual Meek and Mighty 1,000m Ocean Swim. She also achieved the highest points in the 3rd Annual Heptathlon Virtual Meet (225 points), swimming lifetime bests in all her events; and swam six lifetime bests in the Far North Queensland Championships.

BUCHER

From Page 28

rain has made things grow quickly," Nicholas said about this year's trail.

Nicholas, meanwhile, lamented the "downgrading" of this year's XTERRA Saipan from a full-fledged race that Team Unlimited organized to a mere licensing agreement, but added that he understands that the budget of the Marianas Visitors Authority is tight right now.

"Perhaps it is like being a parent, but with the help of MVA we brought this race to birth and saw it grow to a true internationally recognized event. I am afraid that is not the case today

and it seems a shame that so much was invested; both financially and in effort, to see it go away," he said.

"The reason we are not here is the decision of MVA not to fund the event because of budget constraints. I completely understand if there are not enough funds, but nobody should ever say the return on MVA's investment is not well worth every penny times two," added Nicholas.

He, however, hopes that the entire Team Unlimited crew will be back someday to organize the event full-time as it did the previous five years.

Asked why is XTERRA Saipan considered the crown jewel of the XTERRA Global Tour, Nicholas answered a mouthful.

"The people make it the jewel. We must all understand it is not easy to get here, nor is it inexpensive. But when you combine the smiles of the local people, the blue waters, the jungle and the history it becomes a bigger thing than the sum of its parts. As example: we put out two water stations on the bike and five on the run. Over the years, the people have loved to see the race so much they take it upon themselves and put out another three or four. The athletes just love it. The local kids that show up for the bike and run races are simply overwhelming. I think the government needs to come and see what this event does for the local people as well as the folks who travel here and

the exposure through media the event produces," he said.

TEAM

From Page 28

different teams in the in the Belau Amateur Softball Association league.

The team is scheduled to leave in the first week of July to compete in the 2008 Goodwill Softball Tournament, which will be hosted by Palau this year. Saipan will host the 2009 edition.

The games will be played at the Meyuns and Airai ball fields in Koror, which is the same venue of the men's and women's softball matches in the 2005 Palau South Pacific Mini Games.



Favre rules out return to football

Sitting by himself on an airplane ride up to Green Bay on Thursday morning, Brett Favre struggled to find a sincere and graceful way to say he was finished with football. **25**

Saipan Tribune Sports

Mets use rubber bands to teach their pitchers

Johan Santana stepped on the mound for his bullpen session, peered in at the catcher and noticed something new. There was a thin rubber band stretched across home plate, representing the bottom of the strike zone. **24**



28 SATURDAY, MARCH 8, 2008

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

GCA and SIS claim JV crowns

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

The Grace Christian Academy Eagles and the Saipan International School Geckos claimed the girls and boys titles of the 2008 Private School League Junior Varsity Basketball League, beating separate foes in yesterday's finals at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

The Eagles played in both championship matches but could not complete a sweep and was only successful in the boys division.

The Eagles used a third-quarter scoring rally to cruise to a 62-54 win, while the Lady Geckos went undefeated the whole season before downing



JON PEREZ

The Grace Christian Academy Eagles, left, and the Saipan International School Lady Geckos celebrate their respective wins in last night's finals of the boys and girls division of the Private School League's Junior Varsity Basketball League at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

the Lady Eagles, 37-23, in the first game of yesterday's championship doubleheader at Oleai. Lester Vertudez scored 12 of

his team-high 22 points in the second half to lead GCA's breakaway to thwart the Knights' Sky Li's one-man show.

Trailing for most of the first half, Vertudez's back-to-back 3-pointers started the Eagles' comeback bid as they took a

25-24 halftime lead. Li was the Knights' scoring machine, most of the time going coast-to-coast to score uncon-

tested layups or bury 3-pointers from all corners.

The Eagles changed tactics in **See GCA on Page 27**

Swimmers, netters are February's finest

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR



Three swimmers and a pair of tennis players were hailed as the Northern

Marianas Amateur Sports Association's Athletes of the Month for February.

In voting held Thursday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium conference room, representatives of NMASA member federations gave their nods to

See SWIMMERS on Page 27



Wong



Heo



Johnson



Jones



Martinsen

Team Sai-Pal thanks supporters

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

A team composed of players from different teams playing in the Belau Softball League has been conducting several fundraising activities that would help them go to Palau this July.

BSF coordinator and prominent baseball and softball umpire Brian Adelbai has been coordinating the fundraising activities of Team Sai-Pal, which is short for Saipan and Palau.

Adelbai said they wanted to thank all supporters who already helped them come up with the initial amount that would fund their Palau trip. He said that last week they had a sunset cruise along the Saipan Lagoon.

Adelbai is thanking the USSP band, Ace Elemetao, Kautz Glass Co., D&I Saipan, and Digna Silil.

He said that they will be holding more fundraising events and they are asking for more help in the community.

Team Sai-Pal is a selection of the best players from **See TEAM on Page 27**

Bucher, Noble, Vance headline 6th XTERRA Saipan

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

The 6th XTERRA Saipan Championship kicks off this morning with three-time defending champion Renata Bucher of Switzerland expected to complete a four-peat.

While there's no clear favorite in the men's race with the withdrawal of Switzerland's Olivier Marceau, who won the past four editions of the off-road multi-sport event, XTERRA Global Tour managing director Dave Nicholas believes Australia's Andrew Noble and the United States' Jim Vance each have a shot in succeeding Marceau in this year's race.



XTERRA © RICH CRUISE

The 6th Annual XTERRA Saipan Championship kicks off this morning in the waters off the American Memorial Park's Micro Beach.

"Renata Bucher of Switzerland is here and she is a three-time champion, so it will take something major to stop her. Andy Noble and Jim Vance should rule the men's field. Both are experienced and very fast men," he said in email to the *Saipan Tribune* before hopping on a plane with XTERRA Global Tour support services manager Tyson Pualoa back to their home base in Hawaii.

Nicholas and Pualoa arrived on Saipan last Feb. 28 and stayed to help clear the XTERRA Saipan trail until Monday, March 3.

"The courses are essentially the same. Local riders have added a short new section on the Egigi Road area. The entire course has been cut, but it needs some updating as the

See BUCHER on Page 27